WHAT BAPTISTS SHOULD BELIEVE AND PRACTICE

COY MUCKLE

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WHAT BAPTISTS SHOULD BELIEVE AND PRACTICE

BY
COY MUCKLE

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
THE KING PRINTING COMPANY
BRISTOL, TENNESSEE

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By

COY MUCKLE

Dedication

to

C. C. Burris

President Of Wingate Junior College

Whose devotion to truth and loyalty to the highest standards of Christian practices have been a constant inspiration to me,

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Preface

The fact that Baptists are democratic in practice and the government of their churches follows this way of life inevitably leads to free thinking; therefore you will find among Baptists of the past and present various interpretations of the Bible together with many ideas of life. Some have dared to write creeds for Baptists, but these creeds have never been generally accepted. You can't judge a Baptist by the rules that some other Baptist has written; for when this happens, the original position is lost. It would be difficult to say what Baptists do believe or have believed, because they have differed in beliefs and continue to do so today. I doubt if the time will ever come when all Baptists believe and practice the same things. It might not even be good for such a thing to happen; for some self-styled sage would write a creed for the churches, get it adopted and then the virility of Baptists would be no more.

I am positive however, that truth does exist, and that when it is found and established as truth, it should be universally accepted and honestly practiced. For many years I have felt that some one should state "What Baptists Should Believe and Practice" in a simple concise form, and in a small compass, so that those "who run may read". This the author has done in a splendid way. His years of training, his wide experience in civil life

as a pastor, teacher and college administrator; his years of service as a chaplain in the army give him a platform from which to proclaim his message. Diligent research, close observation, keen insight into history, and a deep appreciation of human nature coupled with his love for "The Book" have given him the message.

In fifteen chapters the author covers almost the entire field of Christian doctrines and presents these in a clear concise form. The material is information, clear and should be interesting to all Christians, especially Baptists. The conception of the Trinity is clear and accurate, and should lead the careful, conscientious reader into a better understanding of this great mystery. The chapters on the Bible, sin, salvation, the church and its ordinances ring true to the fundamental interpretations of the Bible. They show no departure from the generally accepted doctrines of Baptists. The chapter on the second coming is the best presentation of this much disputed question that I have seen. The author seems to be neither "post" nor "pre" but rather "pro". Extreme positions either way are harmful, in fact they are not tenable. The conception of heaven and hell seem to me to be the only possible ones. The author has wisely stayed away from the ranks of a "Know All". The writer really reaches the heights in his last five chapters. He takes the messages of the Book and the facts of history, interprets and explains them in the light of modern thought. He has a living, dynamic message, and indeed a very prac-

tical one. The final chapter on church union should be read again and again. We are facing a grave era of perils concerning which the writer speaks clearly.

I do not agree with every conclusion at which the author arrives, for I, too, am a Baptist and reserve to myself that which I concede to others. The book is old in thought, yet new in interpretation and application. If read carefully and used in every day life it will be a blessing to Baptists and other Christians. The book should be in the libraries of pastors, church workers, colleges and churches. Every Baptist home should have a copy. I heartily commend this book to conscientious readers everywhere.
September 1946

C. C. Burris

Pres. Wingate Jr. College

INTRODUCTION

Orthodoxy and ignorance are not synonymous terms, though the tendency is definitely to consider it so. There is an assumption, on the part of many in the field of education and research, that when one seeks to find light in the field of religion he must dispense with the fundamentals, and must build his premise on the theory that nothing can be known on a basis of experience and revelation, but that all things must be discovered through the process of scientific investigation. No lover of truth ever seeks to discount the value of either science or investigation, but that same person also knows that there is authority in religion which is definite and positive; and no kind of doubtful assumption will destroy his belief in those essential elements of truth which have been given to us by a power which is beyond us.

Baptists stand in a very hazardous position with reference to an assumed new intellectual crisis coming out of the war. It is more imaginary than real, but those who think they sense it are insisting that the landmarks be either given up altogether, or so seriously compromised that their influences will be without value. Our age-long and well known position concerning the scriptures as the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice, is to be genuinely questioned and tested, and our people must know the answers to the questions which are

to be insidiously framed and cautiously propounded. In many ways, Baptists are the last segment of believers who are able to point to the scriptures as the basis for all their beliefs and practices. It is important therefore that this New Testament group shall remain loyal as far as fundamental truth and doctrine are concerned.

New Testament truth, and the necessary subjects coming out of it, are ably taught in our colleges and seminaries. There is considerable anxiety expressed by many of our people as to the genuineness of much of this teaching, but it is here assumed that, for the most part, our schools are sound in all the fundamental New Testament doctrines. This teaching, however, is only possible of attainment for a small group of our people. Our ministers receive such instruction, or at least a great many of them do, but their programs in their churches are so burdened with other interests that doctrinal preaching and teaching is almost impossible. The many splendid laymen which we have in our churches are usually laden with the cares of business to such a degree that they cannot find the time to make sufficient preparation for any doctrinal teaching to those whom they may teach in Bible classes on Sunday.

It is therefore highly probable that the average Baptist is not as well grounded in the fundamental teachings of his faith as he might be; and it is believed that if he could have access to a small volume that would bring these teachings to him

in a way that would be easily understandable it would be of value to our general program of teaching and work. With such in mind this little book is released, in the hope that it may be of value to all our people. Obviously there is no attempt at extended discussion on any of the subjects attempted. There is not assumed any superior knowledge or scholarship in any field, but only an honest attempt to bring to all of us, with some degree of positive freshness, another reminder of our obligation to stand solidly behind our heritage of fidelity to the New Testament and all that its teaching implies.

Material for these chapters has been gathered from many sources. The text books in Theology which are used in our seminaries have been reviewed again. I had the privilege of attending two of our great Seminaries and had courses in Theology under the professors now teaching in these schools. Walker's text in Church History has been reviewed as has books on Baptist history by Cook, Ray, Mosheim and Jarrel. "The Great Doctrines of the Bible" by Evans has been studied, as has "Christian Creeds and Confessions" by Gumlich. "The People Called Baptists" by McDaniel, and "Infant Baptism" by McGlothlin have both been carefully studied. The Standard Prayer Books and Confessions of Faith for all denominations have been examined, as have their creeds and catechisms. Phelan's "The New Handbook of all Denominations" has also been studied. That splendid book, "Religious Liberty" by M. Searle Bates has been care-

fully read as has, "What We Believe" by William Cooke Boone. "The Baptist Line" by Professor Morgan and "Trails of Blood" by B. H. Carroll have furnished valuable assistance. Nevin's book "Alien Baptism and the Baptists" has also been read. And the Greek New Testament by Wescott and Hort; the revised version of the English Bible; Cruden's Concordance; and a good English Dictionary have been constant companions. Many smaller pamphlets and books have been read, and conferences with army chaplains and civilian ministers have been a valuable source of information.

References to other denominations and groups are made dispassionately and without prejudice. They have been mentioned for the purpose of making comparisons and establishing facts and in using their names no intentional bias or misrepresentation is directed to any of them.

It is earnestly hoped that this little book will accomplish the mission for which it is intended and that those who read it may receive both instruction and spiritual help.

Coy Muckle

CHAPTER I

The Father

Genesis	*1:1*
Genesis	*12:1*
Exodus	*2:14*
Exodus	*20:3*
Judges	*6:16*
II Samuel	*7:8*
Job	*38:4*
Psalms	*90:*
John	*4:24*
Col.	*1:15*

The importance of a right conception of God can hardly be overestimated. No people have ever become a great people who have not had a lofty and sensible conception of God. Those of us who have been into many lands during these past months have been struck most forcibly with this fact. We have found people of brutality undreamed of; of filth and squalor beyond our comprehension; of ignorance and superstition which cannot be measured or described; all because these people have a faulty conception of God. Some of them have the conception that God is a wrathful

tyrant which must be appeased by the sacrifice of some article which they consider to be of great value. They believe the storms and famines and other causes of suffering and destruction to be the revelation of the wrath of God toward them; and since they have not been instructed in the spiritual attributes of God they get the idea that He must be appeased, if they are to live.

Very many more people have the conception that God is a secluded being who must be approached either by some person with special authority, or through some medium with mysterious powers. The medium may be a veiled figure in bronze, or a spirit existing in some beast or reptile. The person with special authority may take the form of an emperor, to whom they believe God has given the business of managing the world. His word is final in every matter pertaining to them, and for him they are willing to give even their lives. To others the person with special authority may take the form of a priest who has led them to believe that all the oracles of truth have been delivered to him through the organization which he represents, and that every phase of their living must be regulated by this errorless institution, of which he is the direct representative to them. In either case, God is foreign to them, and they are not acquainted with the great truth of the competency of the individual soul before his God. No conception of God has come to them that will make them intelligent followers of Him.

The Hebrews have given to us, in our old Testament, our finest conception of God. They have pictured Him as a being of great power, for more than twenty five hundred times they use the word "Elohim", which emphasizes the omnipotence of God. This power is portrayed in the creation of all things, for the very first picture that we get of Him is that of a creator who makes and ordains all things after His own will, and in a most orderly fashion.

The old Testament also gives us the conception of God as a being of great mercy. More than five thousand times the word, "Yahweh" or Jehovah is used, which gives us the idea of one of everlasting mercy or kindness. In Psalms one hundred and thirty six, the sentence, "For His mercy endureth for ever" is repeated more than a score of times, and many more of the songs of the synagogue abound in expressions of the great mercy of Jehovah. The prophets pick up the thread and proclaim the wonderful patience and mercy of God. Paul brings the idea over into the New Testament and declares that the abundant mercy of God is the reason for our deliverance.

The word, "Elyon" is used to picture God as the highest and supreme being, worthy of worship and adoration. In Isaiah six, we hear him saying that he saw "The Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." The same picture is shown in the New Testament for in its final book we have the

scene of the throne of God in Heaven with all those around Him who do obeisance to Him. The word "Adonai" is close to this idea with a greater leaning to the conception of one who rules and governs. The sacred word is positive in its description of God as the one who governs the universe and who is able to raise up and tear down as His sovereign will may determine.

We also have in the book the word "El-Shaddai," which means to be strong and just. While God is known to be a being of great mercy, He is nevertheless one of exact and equal justice. Isaiah the great national prophet of Israel, continuously warned the people that God would not continue to close His eyes to their wickedness, but would surely bring to justice those who ruthlessly disobeyed His commands. The writer of Revelation closes his book by giving the picture of the great judgment throne before whom the dead, both small and great, must appear, to be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

Another of the words used by the Hebrews in their description of God is "Jehovah-Jireh," meaning that God sees and understands. That has always been of great comfort to the Hebrew people even in the periods of their greatest persecution. Over in second Chronicles there is a promise which reads, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect

toward Him." The people of God always believe that their Jehovah never sleeps or fails to understand their sorrows and their need of Him. The word "Olam" is used in the sense of covering up, and is the word used when it is promised that our sins are covered.

Many other words, suggesting varied phases of God's nature, might be given, but these are enough to give us a true conception of Him. The natural attributes of God may be said to be omnipotence, meaning that He has all power; omniscience, meaning that He is possessed with all knowledge and wisdom; omnipresence, meaning that He may be present everywhere at all times; sovereignty, meaning that He reigns and rules above Heaven and earth; and immutability, meaning that there is no fault or error in Him, and that He is utterly unchangeable. These may be said to be characteristics of God which are natural to His being.

Some moral attributes of God may be faithfulness, meaning that He never fails us in the fulfillment of any promise which He has ever made to us; righteousness, meaning that there is nothing unclean with Him, and that every thought and act are always and forever on the side of right; holiness, meaning that He is utterly pure in thought and action and intends that His children shall strive to follow in that path; mercy, meaning that He is full of compassion and forgives us in

spite of our rebellious natures; and love, which means that in spite of our sins and evil practices He loves us and seeks our greatest good. He deals with us as a father with his children because of His matchless love for us.

The Bible teaches that God is a spirit. It also seems to teach that there is a centralized place of habitation where God dwells and rules. In the New Testament we are taught that Jesus sits at the right hand of God as our intercessor and advocate. Jesus also told His disciples that in His Father's house there was much room, and that He was going to get ready a place to receive them. We are also taught to say, "Our Father who art in Heaven," and "on earth as it is in Heaven." In the fourth chapter of Revelation we have the picture of the throne, and the hosts falling down before God in adoration and worship. Thus it appears that even though there is a centralized and fixed place for God's dwelling, He also, as a spirit, may be found everywhere at all times. There is no contradiction here, because since God is not subject to time or space, He may be ruling in Heaven, and at the same time be, as spirit, at many other, or all places.

Many people profess to believe that God only exists as nature, or that nature is God. They say that no God personality exists apart from nature and the natural order. But the Bible would not

substantiate such a belief. The book teaches that, "the heavèns declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork." But nowhere are we taught that nature and God are one and the same thing. Nature is not God, though it is one very beautiful and certain revelation of Him. The beauty and glory of natural things only portray the greatness and the glory of God. The nineteenth and twenty fourth and ninetieth Psalms are witness to this declaration. The moral order of the universe is not God though it speaks in positive terms of His existence, and is one revelation of Him.

There are certain things that I think Baptists should believe and teach about God. The first is that *God is the creator of all things*. I do not think it should be held as a test of fellowship that one should have a fixed and detailed dogmatic scheme worked out for the creation, but we cannot be Bible followers unless we give allegiance to its doctrine of the creation. To demand that a Baptist, who is supposed to be founded on the teachings of the Bible, should be forced to conform to the theory of the six day, twenty four hour per day creation, would be rather out of line with independent thinking, which is a definite Baptist principle of freedom. Probably most Baptists do conform to that theory and also to the Usher count of six thousand years, but such conformity should not be deemed an essential to full fellowship as a

Baptist. There are a great many fine Baptists who do not believe either theory, and they have a right to their convictions about it. But all Baptists should be solid in their belief that God is the creator of all things.

And then I think we must believe that *God has a definite plan for His world.* There is nothing haphazard about it. He did not create it and leave it to aimless coasting. He does have certain natural laws which produce certain definite results, but He may change or interfere with any of those laws if in His infinite wisdom He so decides. Just as the architect draws the plan for a great building, so God has made the blueprint for His world, and He will be certain that the plan is completed as drawn. And whatever length of time is necessary for working out His great program will be taken, for God is not bound by time. The limitations of time are human and not divine; they are temporal and not eternal. A thousand years in our reckoning may be but a day in His, as is declared by the Psalmist, and repeated by the most impulsive disciple.

And again I think that we should believe that *man has a definite place and responsibility in God's great plan.* Man is the highest work of creation. Only about him did God say that He had made him in the image of Himself. And all the Bible story is about God's dealings with this creature

that He made, capable of having fellowship with Him. God told him to take the world He had made and subdue and control it, and use it for his own good and blessing. We have been made the stewards and overseers of God's world and He will hold us accountable for our stewardship. He has chosen and called certain leaders to point out, at different intervals of time, those spiritual principles which He expects us to propagate and teach to all of those whom He has made in His own image. And in spite of the failures of man, He is still the center of this plan.

And we must remember also that *God does not change with the seasons.* We must never fall into the belief that man makes his God to suit the specific pattern which the times demand. One of the advocates of this theory has said that God could hardly be an autocrat in a world of democracies. Such a person does not have a Biblical conception of God. God is going to be what He has been, and is, regardlesss of the types of governments a certain age may produce. We read, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Man has not made God, but God has made man. And any misconception we may have of Him does not change the fact of His unending existence and His absolute power and sovereignty. And whether democracies may be the pattern of the times or not, does not alter the nature of God,

for God is above and before all governments. We do well to put stress on the place which man has in the great world around us, but we must never forget that it is God's world and that in His sovereignty He may and will do with it as He chooses.

We should also emphasize that *God is Fatherly and forgiving*. Though absolute in His power He is kind in His treatment of His creation. My early conception of God was that He was some long bearded tyrant living on some far away island somewhere who took delight in punishing those who did wrong. As a child I was frightened with the promise that the "Boogerman" would get me if I didn't behave. I was afraid of the storms because I was told that the thunder and lightning were sent to get boys who were mean. Since I have grown up I have found that God is long-suffering and forbearing. That discovery has made me want to try again when I have failed. The story of man's progress is also a story of God's patience and forgiveness. And the wonderful thing about God to me is, not that He is able to ordain the sun and stars and direct His orderly creation, but that He should consider an unworthy and insignificant creature like me. That worried the Psalmist too, for he said, "When I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: What is man, that thou art mindful of him." But He does consider us, and He forgives us when we do wrong and blesses us

when we do right. For "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame: He remembereth that we are dust."

There are certain practices which should characterize us as Baptists. *We should do the right thinking about God.* We must always look upon God and think of Him as a being to be worshipped and not as a force that is to be evaded, or taken as a matter of course. He must be a personalized power to us, and our practices must reveal that we believe Him to be present in the affairs and programs of the world. And we should humbly plan our living in recognition of such a conception, and should never live as though we thought that God had probably made the world, but had left it to its own aimless drifting. That kind of idea will destroy our humility toward Him which is probably the most commendable virtue we have.

And then we must practice the *right kind of prayer toward God.* It always gives me a depressed feeling to hear preachers, or other seemingly devoted people address God as "You." I have heard them, in a so-called prayer, say, "We thank you," or "won't you come and be with us," or some other phrase in which they seem to look upon God as a "Buddy," who might be able to do them a small favor; rather than recognizing Him as the giver of all great blessings. Of course, when I hear

that, I always try to remember that such people need instruction rather than criticism, but even so, they have been introduced to better practices than that.

These same people profess to be great sticklers for the Book. If they will search the scriptures they will not find the use of any such phrases. Jesus may be said to have had the best right to intimacy with God, but if you will read His great prayer in the seventeenth of John you will find that He always says, "Thy" and "Thee" and "Thou", and never you and your. And this prayer is most personal and intimate. And in the model prayer given us in Matthew six, He says, "Thy name" and not your name; "Thy kingdom" and not your kingdom; "Thy will" and not your will. Every example and genuine teaching which we have would definitely forbid the use of such language in addressing Him, and as a people we do not have such lack of training that we must engage in that type of practice.

And we should practice the *right kind of worship toward God*. And here is our greatest failure. Many of us make of our churches meeting places for conversation and social intercourse. We seem to forget that we are there to meet God and to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. I have observed services in which the minister poured out his heart in his message and immediately upon dis-

missing the congregation the chatter reminded me of a bunch at a carnival or a county fair. The message entirely forgotten, the members made dresses, traded cars and horses, did some canvassing for their favorite candidate, or made plans for the movie on the following evening. We have sunk so low in irreverence that in some of the more illiterate congregations there is practiced hand clapping and cheering when some person "performs" quite brilliantly, or some report sounds good. The phrase, "give them a hand" has captured many of us. We have heard that over the radio at barn dances and quiz programs and hit parades, and we don't seem to know the difference. I attended a Baptist State Convention a few years ago, and the presiding officer seemed to be anxious to cheer everybody who made a good impression. Of course, I don't suppose the Lord would be expected to be at a convention, but if He should have been, He would have been greatly grieved at such procedure. And also the brother who gave us the opening prayer invited Him to come and be at every session. All of our services are primarily for worship and should be hours of reverence and times of decision and dedication.

I attended a large men's class in one of our large Baptist churches. After the class preliminaries the teacher arose to teach the lesson. He is a graduate of a good college and a well equipped teacher. He made a formal twenty minute speech and closed it with a rather emotional paragraph of oratory. The

class cheered him as though he were speaking against communism, or defending the constitution. The habit of cheering those who "perform" well, causes many irreverent practices.

And also I believe Baptists should practice *the acknowledgement of God in the affairs of government.* The Bible teaches us that "the powers that be are ordained of God," and we are specifically instructed to, "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's." The recent conflict has taught us that prayer and faith in God means more than we have ever before thought they would, but we should not let that devotion die with the emergency. The candidate who recognizes God in his responsibilities should receive our support. Our doctrine of the separation of church and state has made us timid along this line, but before many years we'll find it necessary to become very active in the matter of the choice of leaders.

Not long ago I had dinner with a fine Baptist family in New York. The father of the home was a very ardent Republican, and we talked a great deal about the parties and their leaders. The mother had said nothing until near the close of the meal when she remarked, "I am going to support this man Truman for the reason that he believes in and recognizes God in what he tries to do." The more I thought about her statement the more I realized

that if God should be leading a ruler, or a government, there wouldn't be any chance for it to go wrong, and I imagine the president knows that only God can bring order out of our present chaos.

And we must also act toward God as those who are aware that there has been planned *a final accounting for our service and stewardship.* That kind of practice toward Him will undergird life with a seriousness and meaning which nothing else can give. The Bible definitely teaches that His stewards are expected to give an account of their stewardship. The parable of the talents and also of the pounds each reveal to us the disappointment which God feels when there is unworthy performance of the responsibilities which have been entrusted to His children. We are stewards of the manifold Grace of God, and when our season of service is ended we may hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." We can't treat our task lightly. It is a sacred trust from Him.

CHAPTER II

The Son

Isaiah	*9:6-7*
Isaiah	*11:1-2*
Isaiah	*53:2-6*
Zachariah	*9:9*
Matthew	*2:1-6*
John	*1:1-12*
Romans	*5:1-2*
Ephesians	*2:19-20*
Revelation	*1:5-8*

All the Christian system has for its foundation the person and work of Jesus. He is the center of all the argument about Christianity, and most of the divisions in Christendom exist because men have not been able to agree on what they believe about Him. When a very young man I sat one day on a bench in front of a drug store with a doctor who did not affiliate with any of the churches. As we watched a group of Catholic worshippers going to mass, the matter of so many different creeds came up for discussion. The Dr. said, "The whole trouble comes about because of your man Christ. You'll never be together until you can agree on Him." And he had it about cor-

rect. The doctrine of Jesus Christ at once becomes the most discussed, the most abused, and the most misconceived of any of our great truths.

There are certain things that we should believe about Him. The first is that *the prophets told about His coming.* In one of the dark periods of Israel's history the prophet Isaiah proclaims his coming in most beautiful and confident language. He says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." And Zechariah says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." There are many others. The much loved passage in Isaiah fifty three describes how He will grow up, and the manner of His suffering. In that passage also we have the marvelous assurance that our iniquities have been laid on Him. The prophets even tell of the place of His birth, and describe the type of kingdom He will establish. Malachi introduces John the Baptist, who shall come as a forerunner of Jesus, and warns his listeners that not many will be able to abide the day of His coming. Those who believe the Bible can never have any doubt as to the adequacy of prophetic description, and the prophetic assurance of His coming, His work, and His triumph.

And we may also confidently believe that *He is the Son of God*. He is one in essence with the Father. If we read that wonderful passage in the first chapter of John we find that, "The word was God." Another of our favorite passages tells us, "He gave His only begotten Son." In John nine and thirty three the man whose eyes had been cured said, "If this man were not of God, He could do nothing." And Jesus Himself makes an undeniable connection when He says, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me ,is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Without any doubt, Jesus here asserts His Deity in proclaiming the power and right to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given to Him. The passage, "I and my Father are one" very definitely refers to their oneness in power and purpose, and proclaims to us the fact that whatever God the Father has and does, God the Son has and does also. In Matthew four and seven Jesus said to Satan, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," reminding the devil of a thing he probably already knew, that Jesus was also God.

If God the Father is omnipotent then God the Son is also, for He said, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth;" if God the Father is omnipresent then God the Son is also, for He said, "For where two or three are gathered together in

my name, there am I in the midst of them;" if God the Father is omniscient then God the Son is also, for He said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." The moral attributes of God such as faithfulness, righteousness, holiness, mercy, and love are abundantly present in Jesus. No friend of His has ever found in Him any trace of unfaithfulness; not even the severest critic has ever doubted His righteousness; no person can deny His absolute purity and holiness in life; His mercy and forgiveness abounded even to those who crucified Him: and His love has been manifested in the giving of Himself in order that even the vilest of sinners might be saved from death. Baptists can, with great joy and assurance, proclaim Jesus to be the Son of God, because their book reinforces every claim they make with reference to such a position.

Baptists must also believe that *Jesus is the Son of man.* He so names Himself. Nearly a hundred times in the Bible He is so delineated. This term is used to point out His humanity. We have the doctrine of the incarnation which means that Jesus as the Son of God in Heaven without flesh and blood, came to the world and took upon Himself a body which was flesh and blood. We have the story in Matthew and also in Luke that tells us how it came about. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin, coming as a normal baby so far as the physical life is concerned. He grew up in the normal way, increasing in stature as years and means of physical growth were added

to Him. He received the instruction given other Hebrew youth, which seems to have included training in a thorough going Jewish home; the studies given in the synagogue; and any other special training He might have gotten from personal study, or conversation with others.

I am aware of a teaching that adds so much halo and mysticism to the birth of Jesus that it destroys the effect of His physical coming. There is the dogma of the immaculate conception which makes the mother of Jesus to have been without sin also. The result of that teaching is to so hedge about the physical coming of Jesus that He could not be influenced by sin. The result of such teaching also is calculated to destroy the real reason for His coming in the flesh. He came in the flesh in order that He might better understand man and his failures and imperfections. Man had gone away from God, and Jesus, coming in the flesh and being crucified on the cross, made a way for man to get back to God through the plan He made and finished. And when we minimize the fact of the humanity of Jesus we lose sight of the reason for His advent in the flesh. The position of Jesus at the right hand of God in Heaven, acting as our advocate, is strengthened by the fact that He was tempted in all points like as we are, and knowing the power of sin and temptation upon us, is more willing to forgive us of our sins when we confess them to Him.

The New Testament is positive on this matter of the humanity of Jesus. He did not have a carnal nature, but He certainly was possessed of a human nature. In Romans eight and three Paul says, "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." He came in human flesh for the purpose of condemning sin. In Philippians two and eight, "And being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." His conversations with people before and after His crucifixion and resurrection bear testimony to His human attributes. He rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and wept with those who were in sorrow. His appearance was always that of a man, even when He came back from the tomb. Those who walked with Him to Emmaus had no doubt about His humanity. We must always remember that even though He was the Son of God, He was also the son of man.

As the Son of God He had the power to heal the bodies of those who needed to be cured; and as the son of man, knowing the power of disease upon the human body, He had the desire to heal them. As the Son of God, He had the power to multiply the loaves and feed the thousands who were following Him; and as the son of man, having felt the pangs of hunger, He was anxious to perform that service for them. As the Son of God, He had the power to fill the nets on the lake of Gennesaret; and as the son of man, sensing the dis-

appointment of these fishermen friends and knowing their need of a good catch, He was glad to perform a miracle for them. As the Son of God, He was able to forgive the sins of the man let down from the house top; and as the son of man, knowing the craftiness of Satan and the terrors of sin, He was quick to say, "thy sins are forgiven thee." As the Son of God He had the power to raise Lazarus from the dead; and as the son of man, sympathizing with these people who had been such friends to Him and who were now so greatly grieved, He found joy in bringing their brother back to life again. His Deity and His humanity were never at variance but always a complement in performing His great tasks.

And also I am sure we must believe that *He died for our sins.* In another chapter the doctrine of the cross is discussed, but let it be said here that the heart of the story of Jesus is His sacrifice on the cross. The fact of His death is attested by historians of every age. And His death was not a mere accident, nor did it come about because He was not able to foresee or check those forces or groups that were bent on His destruction. He was not simply one who held to certain principles and allowed Himself to be killed rather than give them up. He was more than a martyr to a great cause. Any theory about the death of Jesus that makes it an accident, or an act of martyrdom, or an example to demonstrate the love of God for the

world, is not squared by the teachings of the Bible. God did love the world and had shown it many times, through other men and movements, long before Jesus came. The death of Jesus has a far deeper significance than any of these.

In the Bible the reason is given as one of a redeeming, a buying back, a restoration of a lost estate, a chance for the establishment of a status upon which Christian joy and peace may be builded. In Isaiah fifty three and six we are told that, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." A debt must be paid and Jesus must pay it. No other is prepared nor able to pay it. The high estate from which man fell was not forgotten, and at the proper time God sent forth His son to be born of a woman, and to be born under the law, that the curse of sin might be removed and man might have the opportunity to be restored to an even higher standing. The death on the cross did that, and it becomes the center of all our proper teaching about Jesus. The love of God is shown through Jesus Christ our Lord, and its highest peak is reached at the cross.

We should believe that *Jesus arose from the dead.* If He had not risen from the dead the disciples would have gone back to the old worship in forms and ceremonies, confessing that they had thought Him to be the Messiah, but were mistaken; the mother of Jesus would have still remembered the

strange happenings in her life, but would have had no faith, to believe that they had the meaning she had believed them to have; the Jews would have rejoiced at the departure of another imposter of whom there had been many before; the Romans would have marked up another execution, the subject of which had created a bit more notice than had been the usual custom. The resurrection became the center of the preaching in the early church because the early preachers rightly interpreted its importance. All the sermons of the New Testament make it the central message. Paul also gives it a principle place in his teaching and preaching.

Many now do not believe that Jesus actually and physically came forth from the grave. They profess to believe that He was victor over death and had the power of an endless life within Him. They forget certain proofs concerning the Resurrection. One of the proofs is that He said He would rise again. Since He didn't lie about other things it would be reasonable to believe that He told the truth about that. In several places in the New Testament He definitely states that three days after His death He will rise again, and He did exactly what He said He would.

There is also the testimony of the witnesses. Peter, James, John, the women, and others bear witness to the fact of it. They are positive and certain in their statement of it, and their evidence

is acceptable. There are a dozen appearances also which reinforce the doctrine. Paul writes his wonderful passage on the resurrection to the church at Corinth on the basis of a personal revelation of a risen Christ. And the happenings of nineteen hundred years are ample proof that He is no dead Christ. The general upward trend in the living of human beings, in spite of much false teaching and impossible dogmas, is good evidence that Jesus did not remain in the grave, but now lives in Heaven with the Father.

And Jesus is also *the head of His church.* The same vital relation exists between Christ and the church as does between the physical head and the body. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit whom He sent to earth after His ascent into Heaven, guides and directs the church, or local churches, in every phase of their life and work. The picture which He gave to John, and which John records in Revelation one and thirteen, shows Him in the midst of the churches for their direction and guidance. In the passage recorded in Matthew sixteen He makes a definite promise that the church which He establishes on those who confess Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God, shall never fail, but shall accomplish that for which it is established. The verbs are all in the linear action and portray the church as a militant body. He says that the gates of hell shall not prevail to keep the church from doing its work.

Since Jesus is the head of the church that means that everybody who believes in and confesses Him should be in the church. And by the same rule any who do not confess Him to be the Son of the living God are not eligible to be members of His church. That is the basis on which He established it, and anything short of that will not be acceptable to Him. A detailed discussion of the church will be given in a subsequent chapter; but in view of the paramount place which He has in the church, no discussion of Him could ever be adequate without a declaration of His headship in the institution which He said He would establish for the propagation of His message. Christ is the head of the body and all those who believe in Him and are born from above are the members of the body, and as its head He will guide and direct the church through the Holy Spirit in the accomplishment of its task.

And we should also believe that *He is coming again.* Over in the first chapter of the book of Acts the story is told of an anxious group who were watching their leader and Lord go away from them. It reads as follows—"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heav-

en, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.' " They were given a promise which made them go back to their task with a new zeal and confidence. He had gone back to the Father where He would be our advocate and intercessor, and after the work He outlined had been accomplished He would come again to receive the church, which had been the agency through which the work had been done.

Many harmful theories have been advanced about the return of the Lord. Some of these will be discussed in another chapter. It needs only to be said here that the return of our Lord should ever be before us as a fact that would inspire us to cleaner living and finer service. We should always be ready for His return and endeavor to have as many others ready as may be possible for us to do. Foolish theories should not drive us away from the fact of His return, for it is a definite promise from Heaven which will be fulfilled in the Father's own good time. We must ever stand in watchful readiness for the great event.

Then it may be said that as Baptists we may safely believe that the prophets foretold the coming of Jesus; that He is the Son of God, sharing with the Father the work of creation, and the management and direction of His world and work; that He came in the flesh, and as such termed Himself the son of man, revealing His humanity through His sympathy for fallen and sinful man; that He

died on the cross for our sins, making a way of redemption possible for all those who will believe on Him as the Son of God; that He arose from the dead, being the first fruit of them that slept, and giving assurance that all those who belong to Him will also get the victory over death and the grave; that He is the head of the church, and as such will guide and direct its work until it shall have accomplished the work that He gave it to do; and that He is coming again to receive His own unto Himself, in order that where He resides those of us who love His appearing may reside also.

Our practices should also be in line with our beliefs. We should ever remember that Jesus is our divine Lord, and our remarks about Him should ever be those of reverence and adoration. To speak lightly of Him and His work is extremely unbecoming to people who profess to believe that He saves us from all our sin.

Many follow the practice of using His name as a sort of slang expression. You hear men and women say, "for Christ sake" so and so; or "by Jesus" so and so; or "Christ Almighty" so and so. To be sure all of these people are ignorant and uncultured, and most of them unchristian, but there are many professed followers of His who also fall into the bad practice. He is God, and when we take His name in vain, we violate the third commandment as truly as when we use the name of God the Father in the wrong way.

And Jesus should be the center of all Baptist teaching and preaching. Not all of us will agree on all the minor beliefs about Him, but we agree on the great fundamental truths concerning Him. His birth, His life, His teaching, His death, His resurrection, His commission, His ascension, and His return should be the heart of all our teaching and work. We need never be afraid of teaching too much about Him, for He will be found to be a subject which will bear much expansion, and those who know Him will never hear too much about Him.

Our practices in His church should be those which He told us to perform, or which the Holy Spirit has blessed through the years. If Jesus commanded us to practice certain ordinances then we should be positive in our practice of them. If we recognize His lordship in His own church, then we must surely not falter in carrying out His commands; and those practices which have been signally blessed and used of the Holy Spirit through the years must be strictly adhered to and followed. Jesus never definitely said for us to organize a Sunday School, but He said for us to teach, and the Holy Spirit has greatly used that institution for the instruction of men and women.

And then we should remind our people and the world that He is to return. We can't afford to allow any abuses of that great doctrine to scare us away from a declaration of its truth. You hear

very few sermons on the second coming, and it may be for the reason that we have become disgusted at so many impossible dogmas concerning it; but, however that may be, we cannot neglect the declaration of its truth. Probably the finest tonic for the strengthening of all our work would be to keep constantly before our people, in a sensible and sane way, the fact of our Lord's return. For the last words of the book are, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

CHAPTER III

The Holy Spirit

Matthew	*3:16*
Mark	*1:12*
Luke	*2:26*
John	*14:26*
Acts	*2:4*
Acts	*2:38*
Acts	*6:3*
Romans	*5:5*
Galatians	*5:22*
Ephesians	*4:30*
Revelations	*1:10*
Revelations	*22:17*

In the great economy of God it has seemed wise for two persons of the Godhead to remain in Heaven while one had direct contact with the world. During the dispensation of God the Father the Spirit was sent on many missions to the earth as is recorded in the Old Testament. In Numbers eleven and twenty five there is the record that the Spirit was given to the seventy elders and they assisted Moses in serving the people. In second Kings and the second chapter, there is the story

of the Spirit being given to Elisha after Elijah had been taken to Heaven, and with the power of the same Holy Spirit he did the work of his predecessor. In first Chronicles twelve and eighteen we have the record of the Spirit coming upon Amasai leading him to become a helper to David in establishing himself upon the throne in Israel. In first Chronicles twenty eight and twelve we find King David giving to Solomon the patterns of the temple which he had received by the Spirit. In Nehemiah ten and thirty we are told that the Spirit led the prophets to testify against those who disobeyed the law. In Psalms one hundred four and verse thirty we read that God sent forth the Spirit on an errand of creation. In Isaiah sixty one and one the great prophet gives credit to the Spirit for sending him forth to his task. Ezekiel relates in chapter two how God gave him the Spirit to help him to understand the commission He gave him. Daniel is said, in chapter four verse nine, to have possessed the Spirit of God enabling him to interpret the dream of the King.

All of the foregoing are definite proof that the Holy Spirit had an existence in the Trinity, and was active in the work of the world before Jesus came to be born in the flesh. In the very first verses of the Bible we read, "And the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters," giving to Him a place in the creation picture. In Job thirty three and verse four we find, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of

the Almighty hath given me life." The Holy Spirit has never been given flesh, or anything common to our knowledge, and for that reason is hard for us to understand, but He nevertheless has always been the third person of the Trinity and has been a partner to the Father and the Son in the world's plan and work.

When I was at Mars Hill more than twenty years ago a young fellow attempted an explanation of the Trinity that, even though it sounded simple and unimportant then, may have had more reason in it than at first it may have appeared. In endeavoring to explain it to me he said that his idea was that the members of the Trinity were just like a committee, but that God was the chairman. The chairman could call a meeting of the committee and was really the leading member, but the remaining two were a part of it and had their say and function.

The New Testament begins with a very definite ministration of the Holy Spirit. In Luke one and sixty seven we are told that the father of John the Baptist "was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied." In Matthew one and eighteen we read that Mary "was found with child of the Holy Spirit." When Jesus was born and was presented in the temple, according to the law of Moses, a just and devout man was there by the name of Simeon. The record says in Luke two and twenty five that "the Holy Ghost was upon Him, and it

was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." When Jesus grew to manhood and came to the Jordan to be baptized of John the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove and said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."

During the dispensation of God the Son, which was really the period from His baptism to His ascension, the Holy Spirit does not appear often, for Jesus is on earth in person. We are told however that Jesus was "Led by the Spirit into the wilderness" where He was tempted of the devil. The Holy Spirit at His baptism had declared Him to be the Son of God and in the wilderness temptation the devil strives to make Him prove it on terms not acceptable to Jesus. In the personal heart to heart talk which Jesus has with His disciples, recorded in John fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, He promises to send the Holy Spirit to them after He goes back to Heaven, and before He ascends into Heaven He tells them to tarry in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit comes upon them, after which they shall be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

It was on the day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit came to abide, as was promised by Jesus before He went away. The Spirit manifested Himself, in great power, filling the disciples, and causing them to speak with other tongues. The tongues were intelligible to the men who came

from other nations and who had no representatives from their country who were Christians, and who would be able to teach them about Jesus in their own language. Thus the disciples, being filled with the Holy Ghost, became the witnesses to the saving power of Jesus to men from many nations. The incident may also be said to have inaugurated the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, under which we have lived since that day, and which will be consummated with the return of our Lord.

Many people labor under a great delusion concerning the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. All around us we have groups organized into bodies known as pentacostal churches whose members profess to have spoken in what they call an "unknown" tongue. There are many fine and devoted people who follow these groups, and it is extremely unfortunate that they should misinterpret this important manifestation of the Spirit. In one branch of this general group, evidence of having spoken in an unknown tongue is a prerequisite to ordination to the ministry in that body. And since these groups recruit most of their followers from the wayward in less emotional denominations they lay a great deal of stress upon what they term "receiving the Baptism."

A careful analysis of the happenings on the day of Pentacost will reveal that the tongues were not "unknown". The passage says, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak

with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." And immediately the writer enumerates the peoples who were able to hear in their native tongue. All of these languages, or tongues, were well known languages, and the miracle was performed so that those people, who had no representatives who were followers of the new way, might hear about Jesus in their own language. It was a marvelous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and no honest student of the scriptures has the slightest desire to evade its real teaching: but all the circumstances seem to point clearly to the fact that it was given definitely for the purpose of setting forth the new faith in a way that would be of lasting and eternal consequence to those who were at Jerusalem from many lands. The fact that it has not occurred again and again on a worldwide scale, is added proof that He has not considered such a demonstration of Himself necessary to the growth and development of the church, and the dissemination of the truth.

If I should move into a strange town and should go in search of a doctor for an examination I would want to have some recommendation from some person who had been treated and cured by the doctor I would use. If I went into an office, at the front of which a sign was posted giving the name of a man purported to be a doctor, I would want to see a diploma, a license to practice medicine, some tools and equipment, or some other definite evidence that my man was capable to do

the work. But after I had lived there for twenty five years and had seen him heal the sick and do the work of a capable physician, I would not care to see a license, diploma, or other evidence; I would call him on the evidence of the work performed.

Some such illustration may teach the meaning here. The new faith was cutting across the grain of the old established teachings, so strongly entrenched in the minds of the people. Some demonstration beyond the usual practices of the religions of the day was imperative to success. Jesus performed His miracles, and the Holy Spirit continued the miraculous for the purpose of establishing the new faith in the hearts and minds of the people who would be the heirs of life eternal. But since the Holy Spirit has been leading His people and His church for nineteen hundred years, and since the blessings of His leading and ministry are so evident everywhere, it is not necessary that now a new demonstration must be called for. If the Holy Spirit had needed pentacostal demonstrations to carry on His program and work He would have given them, for He is able to do all things necessary to the accomplishment of the mission of His church.

The church at Corinth had gone astray on this matter of tongues, and Paul gives them some sound warning about it. While the new faith was not sufficiently established that the miraculous could

entirely give way to a Spirit guided program of teaching and preaching and practical service, Paul does show them that the matter of speaking in other tongues, than the one natural to them, was not the thing they should most desire. He advises against their use except in rare circumstances, and definitely states that their use and value is only for the purpose of convincing unbelievers concerning the genuineness of the new faith. That was the purpose at Pentacost, and Paul reminds the Corinthians of it again. The Holy Spirit, as the person in the Trinity now guiding the churches and their program, will use whatever means He may deem necessary to successfully consummate the assignment of His church in the world.

The Holy Spirit has a number of definite ministries. The first to be mentioned is that of *quickening into life*. Those who are not in Christ are dead in trespasses and in sin and the Holy Spirit is the power which quickens them into life. In Ephesians two and one Paul says, "and you did He quicken, who were dead in trespasses and sin." And in the same chapter he says, "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." The teaching seems to be that God, through the Holy Spirit quickens into life those who will be heirs of salvation.

No other means of giving life is described as being available. The one who is unsaved may come under the preaching of the gospel, or may come

into possession of the written word, or may hear the testimony of one who knows the Lord, or come in contact with the message in some other way; but the Holy Spirit must use some, or all, of these to bring the dead one into life. He it is who convinces and convicts him of sin, and creates in him sorrow for sin sufficient to cause him to seek the mercy of God. It is the Spirit that giveth life, and it can come in no other way. Many methods may be used to enroll their names on the church book, but only the Holy Spirit can make it possible for their names to be enrolled in the book of life.

Another ministry of the Holy Spirit is to place upon us the *seal of eternity*. In Ephesians four and thirty we are instructed, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The seal of a government puts all the resources of that government behind the document which it has signed. Every force which it is able to mobolize, and every agency which it may control, are all dedicated to the defense and support of its seal, once affixed. In John six and twenty seven Jesus exhorts His enquirers to seek for "that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." God had put all the resources of Heaven behind those to whom Jesus would give eternal life, and His seal was the symbol of it.

That marvelous first chapter of Ephesians contains the passage, "in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." In the last book of the Bible the angel holds up the work of destruction until the servants of God were sealed. He numbers a few, and then sees so many that He can't count them, and says all of them have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. And then he assures us that those whom the Holy Spirit has sealed, or pledged all the resources of Heaven to be their surety, shall have no want, or pain, or sorrow.

The Holy Spirit also has *the ministry of sanctification.* The word in its Biblical sense means to dedicate, or set aside for Holy uses, or to make holy. In the sense of dedication or setting aside for holy uses, we may be sure that the Holy Spirit does that at the time of quickening and salvation. When we are saved He dedicates us to God and His kingdom and sets us aside for the holy uses which the work of God will demand. In the sense of making holy, or pure and clean, a gradual process may be implied, which we may better know as a growth in grace. That meaning is given in first Thessalonians five and twenty three when Paul admonishes the members of the church to follow certain practices which will lead to such a standard of Christian living that a full dedication, or sanctification, of life will be possible. As the living is better the dedication, or setting aside for holy uses, can be more complete and effective.

But the Holy Spirit must do it. In first Peter one and two sanctification is attributed to the work of the Spirit. The Spirit uses the word as an agency, for Jesus asks the Father to sanctify, through His word, those whom He leaves behind. And He promises in this same connection that when the Spirit comes He will lead them into all the truth. In Romans fifteen and sixteen Paul declares that the offering up of the Gentiles will only be acceptable as they are sanctified, or dedicated to God, by the Holy Spirit. Nowhere are we promised that we may have what some erroneously call "sinless perfection", but we are promised a sanctification in the Spirit when we are saved; and His presence and power which will assure us that we need never come under the dominion of sin. And our experience as Christians will testify to the value and truthfulness of these promises.

Another ministry of the Holy Spirit is *that of comfort.* That is the one most mentioned. The original word is "paraclete" which means "one who is called to the side of you." Jesus said, "But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Again he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you." And He came, and remains to comfort us in all our sorrows and distresses.

In Matthew five, in the section which we know as the beatitudes, Jesus is describing the blessedness of those who are His, and He says, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." And the word which is used here is the one which is given to mean that they shall be "Holy Spirit Comforted." It means that the Holy Spirit, whose Baptism we receive when we are saved and who fills us again and again, is present to comfort us regardless of the cause of our grief. It may be the loss of loved ones; it could be the tardiness of the work of the kingdom; it might be grief because of our own sinful living; it could be because of the sad plight of our world; but whatever it is the Holy Spirit gives us comfort in all of our distresses. He makes us to know that whatever the circumstances He never forsakes, but sustains and comforts.

The Holy Spirit also performs *the ministry of teaching*. Jesus told the disciples in John fourteen and twenty six that when the Holy Spirit should come, "He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." He further says of the Holy Spirit that, "He will guide you into all truth." The Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us. There is also the teaching by Jesus to His followers that when they were brought before the magistrates and other powers they were not to be anxious about an answer. He said, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour

what ye ought to say." In first Corinthians the second chapter Paul makes clear to us that the things of God are made clear to us by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

In the same book of Corinthians in chapter twelve there is the enumeration of the gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to us. He makes clear that the Spirit teaches us in every one of these and brings harmony to the whole church by His instruction to every part. Paul, as perhaps the best educated man of his day uses his education to the best possible advantage, but never forgets that in addition to the knowledge he may have acquired in the schools, he is also to rely upon the Holy Spirit for instruction which he can receive from no other source.

The Holy Spirit also *calls and ordains to the ministry and other special work.* In Acts twenty and twenty eight Paul exhorts the elders or ministers of the churches to, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." At the beginning of almost every one of Paul's letters he reminds his readers of his separation and call to the work of the ministry. And in the ninth chapter of Acts where his conversation is recorded the Holy Spirit is said to have filled him, and he straightway began to preach Christ in the synagogues. When writing his second

letter to Timothy he reminds him of the call which has been given to both of them, and tells him that the Holy Ghost will help him to keep that good thing which was committed unto him. In Acts thirteen and two we read, "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

The thousands of men and women who have been called to preach and do other kinds of Christian service will testify to the power of the Holy Spirit in their call to service. No ministry of the Spirit is more clearly proven than this one, and as the work of the kingdom has made progress, and additional fields of service have been indicated, the Holy Spirit has always called the people whom He chose to fill the places of service. And those called ones have gone out to do the work in the power of this same Holy Spirit.

Thousands are the times when preachers of the word have known the anointing of the Holy Spirit for their message. And thousands are the times when these same preachers have felt the lack of the anointing, and have yearned for His presence and power. The honest ones will tell you that preaching is a hard task without His presence and power, but a joy and delight when He stands by to supply unction and liberty. Preparation made without His guidance is never effective. The busy pastor will be prone to allow other matters to keep him away from the sacred place, but he will always

feel his lack of effectiveness when he tries to fight his way through a sermon without the presence of the Spirit. The same Spirit that called him stands ready to infill and anoint him.

The Holy Spirit also has *the ministry of inspiration.* The scriptures were given us by the Holy Spirit. In second Peter one and twenty we read, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The hand of the Spirit was upon the hand of man when the book was written. Paul tells Timothy that all scripture is inspired of God and warns him of the day when men will turn away from the truth and will hunt for themselves teachers that have for their message the things suitable to their own infidelity. Seven times in Revelation chapters two and three we are told, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit sayeth to the churches."

And the same Holy Spirit that guided the men in writing the scriptures also abided with those who translated them. Many passages were probably not as fully done as they should have been, but I believe that all of the great fundamental doctrines of the Bible have been brought down to us intact. And we may be sure that since the Holy Spirit knew what was to be the importance of the written word in the work of the kingdom, He would not have allowed a serious fault in its translation.

And the Holy Spirit has as His ministry *the guiding of the church and the believers in the work to be done*. Many passages prove it. In Romans eight Paul says that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God". And he also says that those who are led by the Spirit will do the works of the Spirit. In Galatians five he exhorts us to walk in the Spirit and lists the fruits of such a walk. In many passages in the Acts of the apostles there is the evidence of the leading of the Spirit. They were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia; they were not allowed to go into Bithynia; but by the same Spirit were led into Macedonia. The Jerusalem council was guided by the Holy Spirit, for when the letter is sent to the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia it definitely states that, "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us".

Then, as now, the Holy Spirit guided in calling the pastors; anointed those who honestly and humbly sought to preach the word; intelligently led those who met in good faith to discuss matters of deep concern to the kingdom; chose those best qualified to attend to the matters of the local church; led into special service those who were needed, and guided them to the proper place of service; revealed to all honest enquirers His will with reference to the use of the money coming into their hands; comforted those who were in any grief

or sorrow; and day by day indwelt in the hearts of even the simplest and humblest followers to add joy and happiness to their life and service.

It should also be said that by our life and practices we may so grieve the Holy Spirit that He will cease to empower us, and our Christian life and service may cease to be effective. Many well qualified Christians are being stood aside, while men of much less ability and preparation are being used to do the work of the kingdom. Paul, in first Corinthians nine and twenty seven, makes mention of this possibility, and says that he fights to so overcome the passions of his flesh that such will not happen to him. The Holy Spirit yearns to use us, but some of us live so far below the standard that He cannot use us fully and well.

Many churches also are dried up and powerless because their teaching and practice is not such that the Holy Spirit can lead them. If a church is not true to the Bible, the Holy Spirit certainly cannot use it, for He inspired and guided the men who wrote the sacred word. If a church does not honor the person and work of Jesus the Holy Spirit cannot bless its work, for He came to honor and reveal Jesus. If a church does not recognize the leadership of the Holy Spirit in all its teaching and work He cannot give it guidance, for obviously He could not prosper an organization in which He Himself was not even recognized. The candlestick is being removed from many, and the power to witness

from many others, because they as a church do not recognize and follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

I think it may then be safely said that Baptists will do well to believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person in the Godhead; that He was sent on many important missions during the days covered by the Old Testament recording; that He was eminently present and active at the beginning of the Christian era; that He came in great power on the day of Pentacost and remains until now under the dispensation named for Himself; that He has certain definite ministries including that of quickening into life, sealing for eternity, effecting sanctification, comforting the distressed, teaching the truth, calling and ordaining to special service, inspiration of the word, and guiding the church and the individual believer in the doing of the work of the kingdom. And we may as truly believe that our living may so grieve Him that He cannot effectively use us; just as also we may be assured that a faithful and devoted surrender to His guidance will mean for us abundant success and happiness in the work He will empower us to do.

CHAPTER IV

The Bible

Joshua	*1:8*
Psalms	*119:105*
Ecc.	*12:13*
Mark	*1:2*
Luke	*1:1-4*
John	*5:39*
Acts	*8:32*
Romans	*4:3*
II Timothy	*3:16*
James	*2:23*
II Peter	*1:21*

There is authority in religion. It would be unthinkable that an omniscient God would make a great plan for His world, and would create a kind of being through whom He intended to consummate that plan, and then fail to give a set of directions to guide those whom He had chosen to do the work. Even a human draftsman is always sure to prepare specifications in the minutest detail, and it is hardly possible that God would do any less.

And this authority in religion could hardly be vested in a mere man. The history of the vascillations of man would certainly prove that he could not be trusted with so important a matter. Nor does it appear that any group of them would do better, for even though their accumulated knowledge might be of greater weight, their multiplicity of opinions would operate in the direction of discord rather than unity. It would seem the wiser policy, therefore, for the specifications to be written by a member of the firm that was to be responsible for the ultimate completion of the building, and who had sufficient knowledge of all the details to be sure that no regulations were included that would mar the beauty and the endurance of the structure. Such a policy was adopted, and the Holy Spirit gave us the Bible.

The Bible has always been Baptist authority. Baptists have ever been people of the book. "Thus saith the Lord" has always been the final word for them. No set of traditions, no matter of what age, has ever been alluring to them; the findings of no church or council have ever affected their allegiance; nothing but the plain, simple word of the Lord has ever been recognized by Baptists as their rule of faith and practice. There have been differences of interpretation and opinion in minor matters, but the great fundamental doctrines which the New Testament sets forth are those to which Baptists have subscribed throughout their history. No substitute has been acceptable to them.

Some years ago in the city of Chicago was held a conference of noted ministers. A Catholic priest was invited to read a paper before the group. In his paper he stated that some things were necessary to salvation which the Bible did not enjoin. The chairman of the meeting objected to this statement and the priest replied to him, "Then you must give up your infant baptism, for the Bible knows nothing of any such ceremony; it rests solely on the authority of the Catholic church by which it was introduced and established". A Baptist meeting would have been subject to no such embarrassment, for they would not have been guilty of practicing ceremonies which the Bible does not authorize or support.

There are those who look upon the Bible as though it were a package let down on a string from Heaven which would admit of no unfolding or unwrapping, but must be admired for its beauty, and not investigated for its instruction and nourishment. They profess to allow no new versions or translations, but like the reported statement of the man with little information, they want the King James Version "just like King James wrote it". Or if the King James Version was good enough for Paul and Silas it was good enough for them. To such people the Bible becomes very much like a rabbit's foot in your pocket, or some other "good luck" token. It becomes a greater blessing to lie on the table unopened, than to be read with a mind that is closed.

Another group contends that the Bible is inspired and meritorious only in the degree that the men who wrote it were of higher attainment. If the book of John is a better book than "Paradise Lost" it is only because John was a better man than Milton. If the book of Acts is better than "The Fall of Rome" it is only because Luke is a better historian than Gibbon. If the letters of Paul reach a higher peak in logic and argument than those of Cicero, it is for the reason that Paul was better prepared to discuss his subject. To them, the merit of the man, the subject to be discussed, and the conditions surrounding the time of discussion are chief factors which determine the value of the document.

The truth lies between the two theories. God did select the best men of the day to write the scriptures. The record clearly states that, "holy men of God spake". They were good men but, in addition to their holiness and general preparation, there was an additional preparation added. The record says they spake, "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost". The hand of the Holy Spirit was on them as they wrote the word. It was not given from their own opinions or their desire to write, but they were directed of the Holy Spirit to write His message. In second Timothy three and sixteen we read, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God". We must believe then that our Bible is not an ordinary book, but is God's message, sent to us by a special method for the purpose of building His kingdom.

The Bible is a book of religion. It deals specifically with man's relation to God. Many people become confused because they think that the Bible is designed to answer all questions. The Bible is not to be considered as authority on science, law, government, and every other subject. It is distinctly a book of the Spirit and deals with those things which pertain to spiritual life. A great deal of foolish argument has ensued because men have sought to read into the Bible so many things that are not there. If we can always remember that our Bible is given us for instruction and guidance in moral and spiritual living we will have less trouble in applying it to life and service. The Holy Spirit, in the scriptures, points the way for man's salvation, and gives direction for right living after he is saved. Jesus is the center of the book, and in it we may find His will for our life and service.

The Bible has a marvelous unity. Over a period of fifteen hundred years Holy men were chosen to write it, and yet the object is the same all the way through. Sixty six books by forty authors over fifteen centuries, and yet the scarlet thread of redemption remains the central theme from lid to lid. There were used poets, a doctor, historians, kings, prophets, fishermen, theologians, lawgivers, scribes, musicians, and pastors. And the fact that the continuity of the message is preserved in spite of all the varied temperaments of the writers is added proof that the writers were definitely guided

by a divine hand. No book is so completely united in message, nor so fully dedicated to the purpose for which it is intended.

The Bible is progressive in its revelation. It has a message for men of every age. When it said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" it was relating the standard which men were using in the day when Moses lived. But immediately Jesus takes the words and gives them a rule of living which was far advanced to the formula given by Moses. The ideal, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" was so progressive that not only had they not reached it then, but we do not practice it now. The sermon on the mount sets a standard of living that Christians may continue to strive to reach for many years to come.

In stating that the Bible is progressive in its revelation I do not mean to infer that the Bible changes to meet seasonal conditions. I mean only to say that the Bible treats of fundamentals that are always present in men, and that advances in conditions of external living do not change the cardinal needs of men, which the Bible can supply. Salvation is as much needed by the man who drives the finest automobile, as it is by the one riding in the crudest ox cart. The women watering the cattle at Jacobs well were as much in need of redemption as the modern ones who start the water to running by the press of a button. Man will

never make such progress that he will not still possess spiritual image and potential, and it is that part of his being that never changes, and the Bible has the message for that.

The history of Bible translation is one of great struggle. The Old Testament, which deals with the calling and history of the Jewish nation, was written in Hebrew, and the canon of books was completed during the third century before Christ. The translation of it into Greek is known as the "Septuagint", and that may be said to be the basis for most of our translations now used. The New Testament was written in Greek, and at least four of these manuscripts are now located in important places for reference and study. The oldest one of these dates back to about the middle of the third century after Christ. Jerome, who was recognized as the leading writer and translator of the rapidly forming Roman Church, makes the translation, known as the Latin vulgate, in the latter half of the fourth century of the Christian era. That is the translation used by the Roman Catholic Church and is the basis for their "Douay" version in English.

The real struggle in translation began with John Wyclif in the fourteenth century. The Roman Church had refused the Bible to the laity and, since that church was dominant in the western world, there was no general reading of the scriptures. The period known as the "dark ages" had

become very dark indeed, because the light of the truth was confined to the cloister. Wyclif bases his translation on the vulgate, and it was only a manuscript Bible. Its influence on the life of the nation was very great and it also assisted in forming the modern English language.

The first Bible to be printed in English was that by William Tyndale in fifteen hundred and twenty five. The wonderful influence which this book had on the people may be seen by the fact that the opponents to giving the Bible to the people burned him at the stake eleven years after the appearance of the printed translation. Other translations followed in rapid succession. Of note was that of Coverdale in fifteen hundred and thirty five; the great Bible by Matthews, so named because of the size of its pages, authorized by the king and appearing in fifteen hundred and thirty nine; the Geneva Bible, a most scholarly and well printed edition, translated in Geneva, Switzerland by scholars who were exiled from England, and released in fifteen hundred and sixty; and the Bishops Bible, in the translation of which eight bishops played a leading part, given to the public in fifteen hundred and sixty eight.

Of the translations which we now largely use the King James Version was first given. This version was made by the order of King James, and fifty four men began work on it in sixteen hundred and four. The group, which included the

leading churchmen of England were divided into six smaller groups of nine each and assigned certain portions of the work. After they had finished their assignments the whole work was again revised by the whole group. It took seven years to complete the task, but in sixteen hundred and eleven was given to the world a translation which certainly up to that time was the finest ever produced from the Greek and Hebrew scriptures.

As scholars studied the authorized, or King James Version and compared it with accessible Greek manuscripts they found many interpretations which did not exactly agree with the oldest manuscripts, which the translators of the authorized version did not have opportunity to use. Thus in 1870 there began the preparation, by both English and American scholarship, of what we call the Revised Version of the scriptures. In eighteen hundred and eighty one the New Testament was finished and in eighteen hundred and eighty five the translation of the Old Testament was completed. It is said that this version does not have as smooth and graceful English as the authorized version, but it is also claimed that what was lost in smoothness of language was gained in accuracy of content. There has also been an edition known as the American Standard Revised Version, but the authorized and revised versions are the two most used in the Bible reading world. There are also a few individual translations put into modern speech, but these do not occupy any place of general importance.

One of the most comforting thoughts to those who love the Book is that in all these translations there is the preservation of all the fundamental and cardinal doctrines of the Bible. There are different shades of meaning given by different groups, but there has been brought down to us intact the great teachings of Jesus and His disciples. The same Holy Spirit that guided the men who wrote our Bible has always guided the men who have been given the task of translating it. We may be assured that the central messages of the book are as originally given.

Mechanically, the Bible may be said to be divided into two divisions. The Old Testament, containing God's first covenant with His people, has thirty nine books, containing nine hundred and twenty nine chapters and twenty three thousand one hundred and forty five verses. It was written by as many as thirty authors who lived over a period of as many as fifteen hundred years. For purposes of study the Old Testament may be divided into five divisions. The first five books may be termed the pentateuch, or five books of law; the second section the twelve books of history; the third section the poetical and wisdom books; the fourth, the five major prophets; and the last, the twelve minor prophets.

The New Testament, containing the record of the coming and work of Jesus under the new cove-

nant and the calling and training of the early disciples for the continuing work of the church, has twenty seven books, with two hundred and sixty chapters and seven thousand nine hundred and fifty seven verses. Its production covers a period of about fifty years, by eight or nine authors. It may also be divided into five sections. The first four books are known as the synoptic gospels, or those seeing the things they wrote; the book of Acts the history of the working of the Holy Spirit in the early church; the thirteen letters of Paul to the churches; the eight general epistles; and the final book of Revelation and prophecy.

I believe the Bible was intended to be given to all the people and not confined to the interpretation and reading of a few. Jesus was talking to a large group when He said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me". There is no evidence there that He was afraid they couldn't understand the scriptures. In Acts seventeen and eleven Paul says of the Bereans, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so". Jesus again said in Matthew twenty one and forty two, "Did ye never read in the scriptures?" All of these and many more clearly indicate that the scriptures are made for all people.

I doubt if anybody would question the fact that in those countries where the Bible has been read by the people there has been a greater evidence of improvement made. The men who have been overseas during the war have no doubt about it. The passage in Psalms one hundred and nineteen verse one hundred thirty saying, "The entrance of thy words giveth light" is found to be true. Everything is made better through the knowledge of the scriptures. The countries are cleaner; the morals are better; freedom and liberty are more sought after and appreciated; poverty is less evident; and respect for the finer and more beautiful things are more pronounced. If you want to witness filth and ignorance in abundant quantity visit the countries where the Bible is kept from the people.

England as a nation has fought for an open Bible for five centuries. Compare it to other countries and mark its greatness. Elizabeth and Victoria and Gladstone and Lloyd George and Cromwell and Churchill have all been advocates of intelligent freedom based on a general reading of the scriptures. Examine the records of general poverty and ignorance found in our neighbor across the Rio Grande, where for three hundred years the Bible was kept from the people, resulting in the fact that when a quarter century ago the reformation began there less than one fifth of the people could read and write. Compare Austrailia and New Zealand with the Philippine Islands, and if you are unbiased you'll be convinced. Check up on the

poverty and ignorance in the Philippine Islands before eighteen hundred and ninety eight when a country believing in the universal enlightenment of the people got hold of the islands. I'm told that the proof of the pudding is found in the eating, and by that rule the case for free reading of the Bible would be easily won. Give the Bible to the people! There will be some very unworthy interpretations made, and some foolish practices inaugurated because of it; but in the main the body of believers will read it aright and base their worship and living upon it in a correct manner.

The great good of the Bible may be seen in the lives of individual men. The best countries are those in which the most men have come under the power and teaching of the Bible. Many of our leaders in this country have been open advocates of Bible study. Practically all of our presidents have made statements commending the reading of the Bible, and most of them have regularly attended churches where the Bible was recognized and read. When the men went into the recent war they were given a Bible or Testament and on its first page was a message from the president of the United States recommending that they read the scriptures given to them. The great Lincoln one time said, "I am profitably engaged in the study of the Bible. Take all this good book that you can by reason, and the rest by faith, and you will live and die a better man."

I think the Bible may properly be said to be God's law for man's conduct; God's light for man's guidance; God's comfort for man's sorrows; God's warning against man's perils; God's food for man's life; God's armor for man's conflicts; God's answer to man's questions; God's history of man's fall; God's story of man's redemption; and God's purpose for man's future. It is His message of love to the lonely, of wisdom to the simple, and of power to the weak. It reveals His absolute holiness and universal supremacy. It is His love letter to His children, His message of hope to the despondent, of pardon to the guilty, and of promise to the believer. It is so simple that no reader need go away uninstructed, and so deep that the finest scholar can never fathom its depths. It will interest the young, enthuse the most virile, and comfort the aged. On its pages the antiquarian may find delight, the historian may trace the record of the past, and the hero worshipper may find an object of worship.

Our practice toward the scriptures should be that we search them. If we do we will reverently respect their message and will be led to believe what they say. Search them *seriously* and they will *save* the searcher from sin and error; search them *earnestly* and they will *enlighten* the searcher in the truths he needs to know; search them *anxiously* and they will *attract* the searcher by their beauty and instruction; search them *regularly* and they will become the *rule* of our faith and practice;

search them *carefully* and they will *convict* us of our sins and disobedience; search them *honestly* and they will *hold* us close to Jesus and His work.

Let us search the scriptures, for they will be the last crutch of life on which to lean when all other props have failed; they will be the key to the door of solace when all other lights are out; they will be the chart and compass to direct us on our toilsome journey when we are in danger of losing the way; and they will become the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, that will brighten the path on life's stone strewn highway. Let us search the scriptures and grow in wisdom with Moses, suffer with Job, sing with Solomon, and walk the streets of glory with John. Let us search the scriptures and live anew that thirty years of the purest life ever lived; stand at the cross with Mary; help to roll away the stone from the tomb; shout the song of triumph on that glorious resurrection morn; stand in awe as He slips behind the clouds; and join the group who wait for the power to witness to the uttermost ends of the earth.

It must be said then that Baptists may safely believe in the Bible as the inspired word of God, given to us as the Holy Spirit guided holy men in its writing; that Baptists have no authority beyond, or in addition to, the scriptures; that the Bible is a book of religion and is not to answer the questions of science, law, and government, as such;

that the Bible has a perfect unity and is progressive in its revelation; that the Holy Spirit also guided men in its translation, bringing to us the great cardinal truths of the faith as originally given; that it is intended that all shall have an opportunity to read it; and that wherever the scriptures have been read and taught, governments have become greater and more serviceable to their people, and individual souls have been blessed with salvation and eternal life.

Our practice should be that of a reverent approach to its study; an open mind and heart for the reception of its truth; a sincere desire to live by its instruction; and a willingness to dedicate our best efforts to giving its message to people all over the world. Others may recognize tradition and ecclesiastical sanction as their standard of authority, but a Baptist can never go beyond his Bible. On it's teachings we establish our institutions, and with its message we go out to win the world.

CHAPTER V

Sin

John	*1:29*
Romans	*3:9*
Romans	*3:20*
Romans	*5:12*
Romans	*6:23*
Romans	*7:20*
Galatians	*3:22*
Hebrews	*3:13*
Hebrews	*9:26*
Hebrews	*11:25*
James	*1:15*
I John	*1:8*

Sin is a universal malady. It does not confine itself to any particular race, or climate, or nation. It is not confined in its effects to people of great wealth or to those in dire poverty. To be a person in high position does not provide an escape from its ravages, nor are we removed from its influence if we are an individual of little consequence. To be handsome, or to be homely, does not guarantee

immunity from its consideration. It is not an upward stumble in man's march of progress, but a downward slip which complicates his struggles, and makes harder his way of advance. Sin is a fatal mischief of the heart which bites with the power of a serpent, with the result of ultimate death.

Man was made in the spiritual image of God. The statement in Genesis one and twenty six, "Let us make man in our image" is a statement used in the declaration of God's purpose to create a human being. He was made in the image of God, given a physical body, and provided a place of habitation where he could secure the necessities of life in peace and comparative lack of labor. He was the highest mark of creation, and differed from all other creatures in the power to choose, and the use of reason. God made him to have fellowship with Him, and practiced daily conversation and communion with the one whom He had prepared to be a partner in the work of the world. Their children were to be born in pleasure rather than in pain, and the business of getting food was to be a matter of gathering it in, and not the toilsome process of digging it from the ground. He was made of the earth in order that he might better understand it, and because of his spiritual imprint and superior powers of reason he was given dominion and rule over the remaining physical creation of God.

In the midst of man's place of habitation God placed His symbol of authority. He told His creatures to keep hands off of that part of His omniscience which He chose to reserve to Himself. He would reveal unto them all that was necessary for their well being, and would continue to reveal it as they needed it, and were able to receive it; but He made it very plain to them that He was still to rule the universe, and they were to assume honors and responsibilities only as He chose to assign them. Some of His previous created beings, to whom He did not give physical bodies nor earthly habitation, had rebelled against His rule and authority in the heavenly sphere; and their ejection had resulted in their being changed into determined forces of evil, bent on the destruction of everything that was righteous and pure. Hence the warning which He gave to these newly created objects of His love.

But an outside influence interfered. One of the evil spirits—indeed the chief one, which had been thrown out of Heaven, had come to the place of God's bounteous provision, for the purpose of destroying the beautiful relationship which existed between God and His created pair. The serpent, being guided by this evil spirit, knew that since man had been created as a creature of choice he was able to stand but liable to fall. And in his subtlety he chose to make his appeal to Eve and not to Adam. Eve had not been with God when He gave the stern command about the fruit of the

tree that man should not eat. Adam as the head of the house was to give her that information and had done so, but she had not felt the power and positiveness of the voice of God as He gave the command. And since she was of the creation of God, once removed, and came from the man, and not from the original dust of creation, she would be able to wield an influence over the man, being a part of him. The proposition was made to Eve and accepted by her. She in turn presented it to Adam, and the head of the race broke fellowship with God; and that is the meaning of sin.

Some years ago I read a book by Dr. S. D. Gordon that listed six words that mean sin, and they seem to cover the field very well indeed. The first one of these meanings is that of *missing the mark*. That is really the original meaning of it. It comes from the Hebrew word "Hatah", and means that man "fell short" with God. God had made an ideal for him which was that of fellowship, and when man disobeyed His command he broke fellowship with God and failed to live up to that standard, and therefore sinned.

The second word to describe it is *transgression*, meaning to step out over the line. There is a line of demarcation drawn between right and wrong, and good and evil, and when we go over the line from good to evil we transgress the law, and transgression becomes sin. We know what is right, and every reasonable assumption is that we will do what is right, but we don't, and we sin.

A third word to delineate sin is that of *unrighteousness*. It means to be against the things that are right. People who are unrighteous are always found on the side of those practices which destroy the community. In Romans six and thirteen Paul exhorts us to, "neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin". And in first John five and seventeen the apostle says, "all unrighteousness is sin".

Another word is that of *iniquity*. This is one of the rough words for sin. It is like unhewn lumber, just the old splintery kind. People who are in iniquity live a low kind of life—one of progressive sinfulness. Gossippers are in the catalogue of iniquity and those people who are void of culture or refinement. James says in his third chapter and sixth verse that, "the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell". Iniquity is vulgar sinning, the kind which causes man to lose all respect for decency and order.

Another word used to describe sin is *guile*. That is the deceitful kind of sin. All hypocrites are in this class. The under-cover fellows live here. The man who has guile in his heart is the one who would do you damage behind your back, but appears lovely when in your presence. He would stick a knife in your back but wouldn't fight you

fair. People who have guile carry malice and hate with them to their grave. They would sell you out if the price seemed to be sufficient.

Lawlessness may also be used to portray sin. The word means to live without law, or against the law. The people who operate the speakeasies are in this class. The man who plays the black market is here also. Many people know the law and are acquainted with its penalties, but as long as they can dodge its execution they continue to engage in any nefarious practice. The group also who do not admit of any kind of regulation for their conduct may be classed here. They let their liberty become a license. They make a great deal of fuss if any kind of law is passed that interferes with any practice which they, themselves, believe to be to their own selfish advantage.

We must always be reminded also that Adam sinned voluntarily and deliberately. The matter was neither slipped up to him, nor put over on him. He had time to study it over and knew that the command of God was against it. The sin of our first parents was purely an act of their own will and determination. Divine limits had been prescribed, and a definite line had been drawn, and man knew that he had been warned not to transgress, or step over the line. Adam and Eve just didn't believe that God meant what He said, or either believed the word of Satan, through the Serpent, more than the word of God. God had

definitely told Adam, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die". Adam was not in the dark on the question—he had been sufficiently warned.

This voluntary sin and fall of Adam as the first man passed the result of his transgression over on the whole human race. Adam was the Federal, or universal, father of the race, and those coming from his lineage would of necessity bear the physical, mental, and spiritual, marks of their parent. And since his sin was committed before any offspring came from him, they of necessity would be born after the penalty had been pronounced and would therefore share his guilt. Therefore the condemnation passed to all men, for all are the seed of Adam. And the sin was not merely a physical one bringing only physical penalty; it was an act of the will and therefore involved the moral and spiritual nature as it did the physical also.

The scriptures are very clear on this question of Adamic representation. In Romans five and twelve we read, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned". And in the same chapter and verse sixteen we have, "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life". And in verse

nineteen, "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous". In first Corinthians fifteen and twenty one, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead".

Then we must conclude that all men, regardless of what may be their class or condition are sinners in the sight of God, due to the fact that Adam is the universal representative of the race. And since, "in Adam all die", then we must conclude that the whole world rests under condemnation because of the Adamic sin. The Bible further says that the thoughts of man are toward evil continually, meaning that unrestrained man would always go downward and not upward. The idea that all are born free from the stain of sin, and that they only come into danger as they consciously commit sin may not be squared by the teachings of the Bible.

The results of this original sin and consequent fall of man may be seen in many fields of our living. Man has been made to perform exhausting physical labor in order to gain a livelihood, because of the curse given to the ground, causing it to bring forth bad along with the good. The physical pain and moral and mental anxiety attached to the bearing and rearing of children is due to the woman's part in original sin. The fear and dread which men have when they meditate upon the cer-

tainty of a future meeting with God is due to the knowledge of their sinfulness. The disease and sorrow so evident to a discerning eye are a definite proof of the universal penalty of sin.

There are also those who make a distinction between sin, and sins. Sin is that status or condition which came to us because of the original transgression of Adam. Sin is the state we bring to birth with us because of the nature we receive from Adam. Sins are the accumulated wrong actions which we perform during our conscious existence. Sins are the outward actions brought about because of the inward deposit of sin. Sin is the disease, and sins are the evidences of it. But sins become sin. The many acts of evil are finally added to the whole lump of sin. Reputation, long enough existing, finally becomes character. A cough, lasting long enough, will finally be a part of the disease.

The results of sinning in our lives may be very many and destructive. For the man who has never been born again, or has never passed from death unto life there can be nothing but a continuation in sin until he turns away from them. His sinful nature will continue to control him, and any conscience toward the things that are right or wrong will be gradually taken away. The only restraints that he can have will only be those of the civil law, and examples of more refined and decent people who live around him. For purposes of busi-

ness and social standing he may feel that there are certain sinful practices in which he cannot afford to indulge, and family ties may also cause him to refrain from doing the worst kind of sin.

In a more general sense I think it may be said that sin *separates us from God*. Those of us who have read our Bibles know that all sin is against the pure heart of God. When the prodigal son came back to his normal self, and returned to his father's house his first word was that he had sinned against heaven. Of course he had sinned against his earthly father, and he certainly had sinned against himself, but the burning fact that sin was against God so consumed him that he forgot all other considerations. Just as in the case of Adam we never want to meet God when we have sinned. Sin separates us from Him, and His presence is never desired. Holy things become anathema to us, because we are not in tune with spiritual forces, when continuing to sin.

And then sin brings about *doubt and unbelief*. We get to the place that we doubt the whole Bible plan of things. We cease to believe in the great truths which the Bible presents, and even wonder if there is such a thing as a future life. Sin creates in those who follow it the attitude that it is all fixed anyhow and they had as well go ahead and have a big time, for the grave is the end of it after all. Christians who live in sin come to doubting their own salvation, and many of them run to cover in organizations that make the claim of

power to deliver them in sin, rather than from it. And doubts reach also to the lives of others, and we get critical of the very best people of our churches. We are prone to measure their potatoes in our own bushel measure.

Sin gives us a *desire for low living*. We compromise very rapidly once we begin in the path of sin. At first it may be only a glass of beer, but finally it becomes an unrestrained drinking party. At first it may be only matching to see who pays for the drinks, but gradually it comes to be a game for much higher stakes. At first it may be a social hour with a friend, but finally it becomes an affair that destroys the ties which have bound up the home. At first it may be only a kiss goodnight, but finally it becomes a violent petting party which makes us lose control and make promises which we cannot keep. Sin carries with it no restraining power. It has no gear which puts it in reverse. It has no power to climb the hill, but always tends downward to the gutter.

Sin also causes us *to hate ourselves*. We not only hate the sins we commit, and many times hate them while we are committing them; but we also come to the place where we hate our own selves. Nothing gives us an inferiority complex like a continuance in sin. David gives us a slight hint of that in his wonderful prayer of penitence when he says, "My sin is ever before me," and "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive

me". Much like the fellow who is just getting over a big drunk—nobody hates liquor more then than he does. We lose respect for ourselves when we act in such a way that we cannot allow ourselves to reach the place of success that we know our ability and preparation warrant.

And also our sins make wretched *the lives of those around us.* We cannot sin to ourselves. It is impossible for us to do evil living and it not effect those who live around us. I have heard people say of some man who was a slave to drink—"Well, he is only an enemy to himself". Nothing could be further from the truth. He tears down the respect of his friends; blights the prospects of those in his home; makes impossible the highest standing for his loved ones; and becomes a general nuisance to society. The sin of Adam cursed the whole world; the sin of David brought shame to the prophet and people; the sins of Solomon made necessary so many taxes that it divided the kingdom; and the sins of Judah cost them seventy years of bondage. We can't sin alone. It always hurts another.

Our sins *also find us out.* The chickens will come home to roost. An old man on a barn dance with a banjo often sings, "You can't do wrong and get by, no matter how hard you may try," and he is exactly correct. For a time men may evade the results of sin, but ultimately their sins will find them out. Jacob fooled his father with a coat and

got the birthright, but later on his boys fooled him with a coat also. He told a lie about his brother, and later on his boys told him a lie about their brother. You just can't whip sin. It has a habit of turning up again at the most unwelcome time. And it is never as small as when it began—it has a wonderful power of growth.

We must also know that *sin results in death.* All the graveyards are there because of sin. Physical death came about because of the sin of our first parents. Sin began immediately to attack our bodies and all through the centuries people have lost their physical lives because of sin. Disease comes as a result of sin and disease brings death. Sin also brings death to moral living. We come to be abject slaves of the enticements of sin, and are not able to extricate ourselves from its power. It makes of men liars, thieves, vagabonds, drunkards, whoremongers, cowards and crooks because it so fastens its fangs into them that they cannot escape its poison. And sin so negates our spiritual witness that it becomes dead and of no avail.

Our practices toward sin should be positive and correct. As Christians and Baptists we should have *an antipathy toward it.* We should suffer against it, or have a natural hatred toward it. When Jesus found men using the court of the temple for purposes of barter He had a natural hatred for it, and expressed that hatred at once. He hated hypocrisy and sham and pulled no punches in condemning

it. When we cease to be shocked at sin we are getting on dangerous ground.

And also we should have *an antagonism toward sin.* Antagonism is organized antipathy. Jesus not only hated the practice of merchandise around the temple, but He got together some whip cords and chased out the offenders. He organized His antipathy. It is not enough to say that we hate the traffic in liquor and prostitution—we must always be ready to join with others in stamping it out.

We must also *stay away from sinful places.* Our influence will be jeopardized when we are found in the wrong places. It is highly probable that a glass of beer does not contain any more harmful ingredients than does one of coca cola, but beer is listed with the wrong crowd. When we get the habit of drink we go to too many questionable places to get it. Evil practices have a habit of getting together in one common fold, and the habitat of one very soon becomes the dwelling place of all of them.

We may also make progress by having *a determination to quit harmful practices.* We can "make up our mind" about certain things. An occasional check-up or inventory will help us also. We must never allow an exception to the rule we make for correcting sinful practices, and seek opportunities for sealing our determination by doing things which have the opposite effect. For harmful gossip we might resolutely substitute helpful praise.

For words of slang we might substitute phrases of adoration.

We will also need to *read the Bible a great deal.* No antidote for sin will be more effective than to have a continual reminder of its deadening effects. And the Bible will most certainly not fail to give us that. On its pages everywhere will be found the warnings against sin. Daily reading of the word of God will give us a power of resistance which we can find by no other method.

Daily prayer and devotion will be helpful. Sin may drive us away from the place of prayer, but prayer will certainly drive us away from sin. When we pray we get in touch with the forces that are the opponents of sin, and have the power to forgive us of sin and cleanse us from it. People who regularly pray do not regularly commit sin.

And then our practice must be that of *being busy for kingdom enterprises.* Bulwarks of strength may be found by keeping in the line of service. The best people still go to the churches, and in them we will find companionship that will make sinning harder, and conquering easier. Idleness is really Satan's most fertile field for effective work, and we must stay as busy as possible in good things if we would have victory over sin.

Then as Baptists I think we should believe that sin is common to all people alike; that it came about because of the fall of our first parents, and therefore imputed to all mankind; that it is de-

scribed in the scriptures by various words and phrases such as—missing the mark, transgression, unrighteousness, iniquity, guile, and lawlessness; that sin was a voluntary act by Adam and was not caused by divine coercion; that as a result of this transgression of Adam death passed upon all men, both physical and spiritual; that man lost his happy estate because of it and was driven from his place of original habitation to earn his food by hard labor, and to experience pain and suffering in the propagation of the race; and that sin will separate us from God, cause doubt and unbelief, give a desire for low living, cause us to hate ourselves, make wretched the lives of those around us, will find us out, and will finally result in death.

Our practices toward it should be that we should have a natural antipathy for it; should exercise a spirit of antagonism toward it; should stay away from its dwelling places; should renew our determination to quit sinful practices; should read daily our Bibles for it's message against it; should pray definitely and continually for help in overcoming it; and should be found busy in the work and service of the kingdom. The closing and heartening word of the discussion may be that there came into the world a sinless man; and in the next chapter I hope to make clear what He accomplished that bore direct reference to this fateful force of sin, and how He makes it possible for us to overcome, in triumph, its effects upon our life and happiness.

CHAPTER VI

Salvation

Matthew	*1:21*
Mark	*10:26*
Mark	*16:16*
John	*3:17*
Acts	*2:21*
Acts	*4:12*
Acts	*16:30*
Romans	*1:16*
Romans	*10:9*
Ephesians	*1:13*
Ephesians	*2:8*
I Peter	*1:5*

No benefit that can ever come to an individual is as important as salvation. It has more to do with every phase of his life than any other force which may enter it. It is a force the possession, or lack of possession, of which causes the separation of men into different channels of living which mean vastly diverse ideals for living here, and entirely different prospects for living hereafter. It assembles for, and on behalf of, those who receive it, powers of

such magnitude that its recipients are able to live in confidence and peace in a world wrecked by chaos and distress. It gives to our lives a direction which causes us to be assets and benefactors in our world, and removes from us any feeling that would make us look upon life as a burden or a drudgery. It creates for us a status, upon which we may establish the kind of work and service that will bring joy and gladness to all our living.

The Bible gives at least three definite meanings to the word salvation. The first of these is deliverance from sin and its consequences. This is the meaning most used and thought of when we mention the word. In the preceeding chapter it was pointed out that sin was universal in the world, having come about because of the disobedience of our first parents. Because of this disobedience the penalty of sin was imputed to all the race. It was natural that it must be done that way since Adam was the federal head, or universal father and representative of the human family. The scriptures say, "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin". It was a voluntary and volitional act by Adam and was not forced or coerced from any source.

And man was not able to extricate or deliver himself from his bondage. The power of flesh was not able to accomplish it. Through many centuries the cry of the human heart and voice was for one who would come to be their deliverer and bring

them from under the yoke of sin. In the oldest book of the Old Testament there is given expression to the desire for a "daysman" or umpire who would come and understand the troubles between them and their God, and would bridge the chasm existing between them. He was not to be merely one who could argue with man, but He must be one who could talk to God, and explain to Him the needs and desires of their hearts. In periods of trouble and exile the yearning became more pronounced, but it was also present even in their seasons of greatest prosperity and happiness.

The Old Testament gives promise of this redemptive person. In the beginning of man's sorrows there is the promise, "and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise his heel". And at once following this promise God made coats of skins from the animals He sacrificed to clothe the first pair and cover their sins. In the story of the flood the rainbow is placed in the clouds to teach the people that God had not forgotten them and would provide for their continuation. In the patriarchal period Abraham is called to go out, on a basis of faith, into a land that God would show him, and he was definitely promised that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. And this promise is made immediately after Abraham has offered to sacrifice Isaac, which incident is given definitely for the purpose of pointing to the fact

that another son shall be offered in the days ahead for the salvation of the people, and to fulfil the will and purpose of God.

As the selective process continues we have the giving of the written law and the establishment of the altar and the priesthood. In the arrangement for the sacrifices for sins the scape goat is provided, and the High Priest puts the sins of the people on the scape goat and sends the goat into the wilderness to bear the sins of the people away; which is another type of the one who will come to give himself for the sins of the people. In the prophetic period Isaiah gives us the pen picture of the one who will come and describes the treatment which he shall receive. Malachi announces the messenger who is coming to introduce Him, and everything prepares itself, in language and in government, for the advent of the redemptive person, long promised and desperately needed.

And Jesus came as the savior, to bring salvation to the world. As the only begotten Son of God He took upon Himself human flesh, lived with men here on earth, and paid the penalty of sin by His death on the cross. The book says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive". Jesus paid the debt of sin which came because of the transgression of Adam and delivered from the penalty of death all those who will come unto God by Him. He became the substitute for us,

and made an atonement which would satisfy the Father, against whose law we had been the offenders.

Salvation is wholly a divine work of grace wrought in the believing soul through faith in Christ. Salvation is an inner experience, made possible by the redemptive work of Jesus on the cross. It does not depend upon any outward work that we may perform, but is a gift from God bestowed upon the one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and accepts the work done on the cross as the propitiation for his sins. He became our substitute and settled our debt of sin which we were not able to pay. In His death on the cross He removed the penalty which hung over our heads, and the guilt which was in our hearts.

The book is definite on the fact that Salvation is a gift. In Ephesians the second chapter and the eighth and ninth verses we read, "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast". In Acts fifteen and eleven "But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in like manner as they". In Romans six and twenty three, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord". In John four and ten Jesus said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee

living water". In John ten Jesus said, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish". And the famous John three and sixteen says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life". Christ is a gift from God to us, and salvation is also a gift of God through Christ to us. We do not merit it—He gives it.

The only condition to salvation is *belief*. It is always based on *belief*. In the story of the eunuch the answer to his inquiry about baptism was, "If thou *believest* with all thine heart, thou mayest". And he answered and said, "I *believe* that Jesus Christ is the son of God". And in Acts sixteen and thirty we read, "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house". Paul talking about the gospel in Romans one and sixteen says, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*". In Romans ten and nine and ten, we have, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness". In first Corinthians fifteen and two, "By which also ye are saved,—— unless ye have *believed* in vain". In Ephesians one and thirteen, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye *believed*, ye

were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise". In Hebrews ten and thirty nine, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that *believe* to the saving of the soul".

I am aware of the fact that when the Holy Spirit begins the process of quickening into life there are elements which precede belief, or the exercise of faith; which means the same thing. There is created a sorrow for sin, causing one to repent. There may be a desire created in the sinner for more knowledge, or added light. Doubts may need to be erased, and many may be held by ceremonies which they do not want to give up. Some may be leaning on their morals or some other crutch which false teaching has made them believe to be efficacious. But whatever may be the hindrances, salvation can never be given them until they are willing to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and by faith accept the finished work on the cross as the provision for their redemption.

And I do not believe that the matter of belief is just the acceptance of the historical fact that Jesus was the Son of God. When the eunuch in Acts eight made that statement it had been preceded by much knowledge. The story says that the Lord, through the Spirit, instructed Philip to go and join himself to the chariot in which the Ethiopian was riding. The Eunuch had been up to Jerusalem and had heard the word in his own language on the day of Pentecost. Now the Holy Spirit had directed

him to be reading the passage which he had heard discussed at Pentecost and which he did not fully understand. And the same Holy Spirit caused Philip to preach to him about Jesus on the basis of what Isaiah had prophesied about Him. There was a full explanation of the plan of salvation, and when the Eunuch asked for Baptism he was in full knowledge of what was necessary to salvation, and was ready to exercise his belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, with all of its scriptural and spiritual meaning. In a subsequent chapter I hope to discuss some harmful methods now being used in Evangelism and soul winning, but here in Acts eight is the example that may be followed in absolute safety.

And men are saved when they believe. Instantaneously they are regenerated, quickened, born again and made a new creature in Christ Jesus. Belief in Jesus is not merely the beginning of a spiritual relationship which if properly cultivated and nourished will finally come to have a permanent value, but the exercise of faith in the finished work of Christ brings salvation the instant one believes. God the Father made the plan and announced it through His prophets whom He ordained to give the good news. God the Son became the offering which God would make, and died on the cross to finish the plan which God the Father had made. God the Holy Spirit applies the remedy to the objects of God's love and grace, and awakens

in them the desire for life; which He gives to them when they accept the provision made for them, and believe in the Father's substitute for their sin and its penalty and guilt.

And they are also justified. They are justified in the sight of God because somebody bought the slave and paid for it, and he is no longer in bondage to sin, but is a son and an heir. He has come to full age and has assumed his place in the family. His big brother sits at the right hand of the throne on high as his lawyer and advocate, and his name is now found on the royal register. He has an interest in the kingdom now, and his interest in it grows as He finds out more and more about its privileges and prospects. His standing before God has been completely changed and his new status makes him a partner in his Father's estate.

They are also adopted when saved. In the great eternal plan of God we were to be children. Just as the Lamb was slain in the mind of God before the foundation of the world but was only actually slain on the cross, so did we actually receive the adoption into the family of God when we believed. By it we share all the blessings which a child does by being in the family, which includes love, likeness, comfort, chastisement, and eternal inheritance.

We are sanctified also when we believe and are saved. It means the setting apart to holy uses, or

to dedicate for holy purposes. There may also be a sense in which sanctification may be gotten by a gradual process. That is termed a growth in grace which aids us in living purer and holier lives. But the moment one believes he is sanctified in the sense of being separated from sin and separated unto God.

And we also have access when we are saved. The scripture says in discussing our privileges with Christ, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need". We do not need to be fearful and afraid when we are saved; but we have a right, or access, which Jesus bought for us on the cross, and which comes to us as children. We have salvation, full and free, by believing on His name, and its blessings bring to us happiness and joy, both here and hereafter.

And these recipients of salvation also perform the initial acts of obedience without delay. They affiliate themselves with others who are saved and ask for Baptism at the hands of the church. No genuine believer ever refused to be baptized. If they are properly informed in the matter of salvation they know that Baptism is given to symbolize outwardly what has happened inwardly. On the part of the believer it declares to the world that he is dead to sin, buried to sin, and risen to walk in a new life. On the part of the church that administers the ordinance, it declares to the world their

belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the author and finisher of the faith that the believer has just exercised. Salvation is always followed by a connection with the institution whose members share a like experience, and the performance of the duties attached to such a relationship.

The word salvation is also used in the Bible to denote shielding from danger, or deliverance from error, or bringing out of trouble or distress. That is not the primary meaning of the word, but is certainly an important one. In the love letter which Paul wrote to the church at Philippi he exhorts them to work out for themselves their own deliverance from the woes that surround them and tells them that God works in and with them for the solution of their problems. This passage, of course has no reference to their initial experience of belief in Christ which gave them deliverance from original and conscious sin, except to say that on a basis of that experience they will be able to follow the will of God in working out their own deliverance from danger and distress.

In the same letter of Philippians in the first chapter Paul is talking about his bonds and imprisonment. He reminds them that he will be delivered from prison. He says, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ". And he was delivered from prison not many months

thereafter. In James five and fifteen we read, "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up". This passage refers definitely to a salvation, or saving, from disease and sickness. In Matthew eight and twenty five we read, "and His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying Lord, save us; we perish". And in the stanza which follows we read, "Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm". In that case they received salvation, but only from the danger of the sea. They were delivered from its distresses. A like incident is found in Matthew fourteen when Peter attempted to walk on the water. He said, "Lord, save me". Of course he had no reference to his soul but altogether deliverance of his body from danger.

And it must be remembered that this phase of salvation, or deliverance, would be a natural consequence of the salvation from sin to eternal life. When one is saved and begins actively to do the will of God, he immediately encounters the accumulated opposition of all the forces of evil. Jesus, and all the early disciples recognized, and were personally aware of, a determined and well planned opposition against the program and work of the early church. It would then be logical to suppose that He would provide a way of escape from these terrors which beset the children of God on every hand. He would not leave them to the unguarded assaults of his satanic majesty, and his angels.

And at the time He paid the debt of original sin on the cross, He also bought the right of open and free approach to the throne of grace for the heirs of the salvation He purchased. We may definitely go to Him with our problems and troubles, and if we do not know how to properly express the desires of our heart, the Holy Spirit will express them for us. And we will receive deliverance or salvation, from them also. In most of Pauls letters he relates some matter that has distressed him, but always rejoices because, out of them all, the Lord who saved him from the penalty and guilt of sin has also delivered, or saved, him from the plans and schemes of the enemies of his soul and service.

And the term salvation is also used to describe a final deliverance of the body. In Romans eight Paul is discussing the glory which shall finally be revealed in us, and he says, "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of our body". He believes in a bodily resurrection, and because of physical infirmity he yearns and longs for salvation, or deliverance, or redemption, from the one he has. Jesus said in Luke twenty one and twenty eight, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh". He assured his followers of a salvation, or redemption, or deliverance from the events of the final day which so try the souls of men. In Romans thirteen and eleven we hear Paul say, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we be-

lieved". History has proven that the disciples, including Paul were mistaken in their belief in an early return of the Lord, but nevertheless they looked upon it as a deliverance and a salvation from the woes and distresses which beset them on every hand. In Hebrews nine and twenty eight we read, "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation". Obviously He brought salvation in the first coming so far as the saving of the soul is concerned; but now He is to return, so Barnabas says, to give salvation, or deliverance, to those who are ready for His appearing.

In second Peter three and fifteen, after Peter has discussed the coming of New Heavens and a new earth, and exhorts his readers to be ready for His appearance; he then says that the long-suffering or waiting of our Lord means salvation or deliverance. When He returns, Peter admonishes, He will give salvation from all the evils that hurt them. In Romans seven, when Paul has discussed the struggle which continues between the things of the flesh and the things of the spirit, he exclaims, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And then he utters thanks that he shall be delivered through Jesus Christ his Lord. Thus it is that the same Jesus who met the penalty of death on the cross and provided for the eternal salvation of our souls; who made it possible for us to be saved from danger and distress of every na-

ture; also provided deliverance for our bodies from the weaknesses and sins that beset them now, and for a final deliverance in the days of the end.

Baptists then may do well to believe that salvation is the greatest benefit that may ever come to man; that its need sprang from the fact of the sin committed by the first parents; that Jesus came to bring salvation through His death on the cross; that salvation is a gift and cannot be obtained by the doing of good works or performing of any kind of ceremonies; that the granting of it is conditioned only on a belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal savior; that it gives to us regeneration, a new birth, justification, sanctification, adoption, and the right of approach to the throne of grace; that those who receive it, immediately perform the initial acts of obedience, which are the act of Baptism and an affiliation with the church of the Lord Jesus; and that the same act of sacrifice which Jesus performed on the cross made possible our salvation, or deliverance, from danger and distress, and provided a final deliverance against the day of His wrath.

CHAPTER VII

The Church

Matthew	*16:18*
Matthew	*18:17*
Acts	*1:26*
Acts	*2:47*
Acts	*6:3*
Acts	*13:2*
Acts	*15:22*
I Cor.	*12:28*
I Cor.	*16:2*
Col.	*1:20*
Rev.	*22:17*

No institution has ever been as seriously abused, and as profusely praised as the church. In the thinking of some minds the church is the cause for all the good influences that have come to our world, while others declare that the church has utterly failed in the performance of its divine task. Many people look upon the church as a fine social institution with the opportunity to do a great deal of

good in strengthening the idea of the brotherhood of man; while many others conceive it to be circumscribed and confined to limits which allow it to minister only to a few. A great number of people believe that everybody should belong to the church because of the good it might do the individual and the community, while a great many others look upon membership in the church as a most serious matter, only to be done after the most careful consideration. Some members of the church believe they must be very active in its work and program, while others look upon it as an obligation which may demand very passive consideration.

The word "church" really means an assembly and comes from words meaning the "called out" ones. The New Testament idea of it clearly seems to be that those making up the church were those who were called out from the world for a definite purpose. That idea is proven by the fact that in preparation of the material for the church John the Baptist lays down some very rigid principles to which they must give allegiance before he will baptize them. He demands that they repent of their sins; and reminds them that they must not rely upon the fact that they are after the lineage of Abraham. Their forms and ceremonies must be given up, and they are accused of being from a generation of vipers, or crafty and malignant people. To those who were not presenting any claim of former religious heritage he tells to divide their goods to create a more equal basis of

living, and not to take more from the people in taxes than they were allowed to do. He told the soldiers to season justice with mercy, and to be content with their wages.

Jesus carried the same idea into execution when He personally, out of this material that John had prepared, selected those who were to be the leaders in His church. John had told them that the matter of the kingdom of God, or the kingdom from Heaven, was to be a personal matter and of the heart; and Jesus backs up John in His teaching. Those who came after Jesus and accepted His teachings recognized at once that it was to be no soft and easy road they were to travel, but their decision to follow Him would entail hatred and privation and want. They soon realized that they were truly the 'called out" ones.

The church definitely begins with the declaration of Jesus in Matthew sixteen and eighteen. It was probably not officially organized there, and I don't guess it ever was in the sense that we think of setting up a well defined organization, but from that time on Jesus and His followers recognized the group as being a body that functioned in the work they were doing. They had one who looked after the funds; others who looked after places of meeting; others who arranged for transportation; another who assumed the role of spokesman for the group; others who secured food at times of eating;

and others who introduced strangers that He might instruct them. They worked as a unit, and displayed marvelous unity. As numbers grew they were sent out on definite missions.

Jesus and the disciples had crossed the sea of Galilee and were going up the slopes of Mt. Hermon. Below them was the city of Cesarea Philippi, the old city of Philippi which had been destroyed by the Romans, then rebuilded by them, and a word added to the name in honor of the emperor. They sat on the site of the rock quarry from which had been quarried the stones for building the structures, in the city beneath them. As they sat there looking down on the city and its buildings of stone Jesus asked them the question, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Several of them answered, and then He said, "But whom say ye that I am?" They all knew, but Peter got there first with the answer, and on the basis of the answer He declared the establishment and the eternalness of His church. In substance He said that sitting there on that rock He would take the little stones, all of them, and with Himself as the corner stone, construct a building that would outlive time.

The interpretation of that verse has made the many groups which we know as the denominations of our day. The most numerous group contend that Jesus established His church with Peter as the definite head of it, and that he and his suc-

cessors have always been, and are, the head of the true church. That doctrine has been expanded to now include infallibility, when speaking in matters of religion, for the one whom they declare to be the successor to Peter. The Keys of the Kingdom they declare to be a definite authority which Jesus gave to Peter, and which has been passed on down the line from that day, and that the church, which the successors of Peter represent, has absolute right of authority in all matters of religion. The temporal power is rightly subject to the church, and every phase of man's life is to be directed by it.

An analysis of the passage does not support such an interpretation. When Jesus assures Simon Barjona of his source of knowledge concerning His real identity He intends His words to be an explanation of the manner in which He has been revealed to all those who know Him. The message was no more for Peter than for the other disciples, but was stating a general fact with reference to divine revelation. The fact of His divine sonship could not have been revealed except by the Father, or one whom He would send, because no other one knew it. Matthew eleven and twenty seven, and Luke ten and twenty two will substantiate such position.

The definite fact also that the plural word for stone is used with reference to His declaration to establish His church, whereas the singular word for

stone is used when designating the man with whom He is talking, is evidence which is most conclusive. The keys of the kingdom allude to the right which the disciples will have to gain access for power and equipment with which to carry on the work of the church; the power which the preaching of the message of the church will have for claiming those on earth for Heaven and sealing them for the same; and the loosing of men on earth from the shackles of sin and its attendant evils of slavery, superstition, and want. In plainer words He means to say that whatever His church, guided and led by His Holy Spirit, shall do on earth, will be certainly sanctioned by the powers in Heaven.

The evidence seems definitely to be that Jesus declared the establishment of His church on the statement made that He was the Christ the Son of the living God; that all those who declare such belief, in real meaning, will be eligible to be a part of His church; that He would make provision for the power and equipment necessary to the accomplishment of its work; and that He would see to it that no power of evil would ever be able to prevail against the church in the performance of its divine mission. In further support of the fact that it was established upon the basis of equal right for all members, we hear Him saying in Matthew eighteen and seventeen, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as

a heathen man and a publican". Recorded in John twenty and twenty three is an incident which further supports the contention that He gave the power to all the disciples alike.

The church remained small, but very powerful. Jesus gave very definite instructions to the twelve whom He chose as apostles, or teachers. He also appointed seventy others out of the small group and sent them out with a definite work to do, and with instructions in detail as to how it should be done. Thus we see that as many as eighty two in a membership of one hundred and twenty at the most, were very actively engaged in doing the work of the church. There was no inactive list, and none who only came about the place of meeting when some special kind of services, or occasion, was on schedule. Before He made His final physical departure from the earth He instructs them to wait in Jerusalem, after His departure, until they are endued with power from on high after which they shall be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

On the day of Pentecost the promised power came, and the church began its world-wide mission. The numbers were so increased there that the church in Jerusalem came to be one of great power and as persecution came the members of that church were scattered, going everywhere preaching the word and organizing churches. The work of

the apostles in the Jerusalem church came to be so heavy that a group of seven others were elected to perform a special and definite work which the program of the church demanded. They were not elected to complete, or perfect, any set organization, but were chosen to fill a definite need which had arisen in the Jerusalem church. Many modern churches have no need for deacons, because they have no program. If you elect them when there's no work to do, they will soon become a menace to fellowship, and the peaceful possession of the church by the pastor.

The head of the church is Christ. That is true of the local church, small or large, just as it may be true of the church universal; if indeed it can be said that there is any such thing. He said, "I will build my church", and since He established it He is ever at the head of it. And He sent the Holy Spirit to be His representative in every one of those that should be formed after He left the one He personally formed. In Ephesians one and twenty two Jesus is declared to be the head of the church, which is His body. In Colossians one and eighteen Paul says that Jesus is the head of the body, which is the church. In Ephesians five and twenty three Christ is said to be the head of the church. In Revelation one and thirteen Jesus is shown in the midst of His churches, and in the following sixteenth verse He has the pastors in His right hand.

The officers of the church may be determined as the need arises. The first officer of the church is the pastor. He is known as the shepherd. In large churches there may be more than one, or the pastor may have a number of assistants. The pastor should have the prayerful support of the members, as long as there is evidence that the Holy Spirit wants him to remain in the position of shepherd. If the pastor is led by the Holy Spirit he will have no difficulty in determining when it is time for him to move. No human guidance can determine that.

The duty of the pastor is to "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof". And also, "preach the work; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine". And also in James five and fourteen He is exhorted to visit and pray for the sick. Preaching, directing, and visiting seem to be about the obligations that the New Testament prescribes. In modern churches there has been added to his duties that of a collector, an architect, a promoter, a financier, an organizer, and a politician. The training which he receives in our schools tend to make him a many sided man, and in order to be able to meet the demands of the modern church such training is probably not amiss.

The deacons of the church are most important. They were elected in the early church to meet a

definite need. The qualifications prescribed for them in first Timothy the third chapter gives definite indication that their work is more spiritual than organizational. And at least two of the early seven proved themselves to be of great spiritual power in the work of the church. They are not bosses, but servants. The modern churches have enlarged the work of the deacon to include a great many more things than were given to them in earlier days. And since they are principally used now for matters of finance and organization, it is perhaps as well that these other tasks have been added. It should be remembered, however, that since deacons were chosen and set apart by a special service in the early church, their function was that of a spiritual ministry, and we should not lose sight of that now.

The next officer in the church is that of treasurer. Jesus had one in the church which He established. He is tremendously important, for no church can operate without some money. He should be chosen for his ability to take care of and disburse the funds of the church by its order; and for the scrupulous honesty which he displays in caring for the funds, and making a regular and detailed report of their disbursement. Just as the most important thing in the life of an individual, next to the salvation of his soul, is the proper use of his money; so also in the life of the church the most important thing, next to its message of salvation for the lost, is its care in the distribution of the money which

saved members contribute. Every dollar that a church treasurer sends out should be authorized by the church at its regular business meeting, at which time the treasurer should make a report of the expenditures of the previous month. No crime could be greater than the misappropriation of God's money, and the treasurer of the church is to see that this important phase of the work of the kingdom is properly done. No officer, aside from the pastor, has a greater responsibility.

There are other church officers such as clerk, trustees, chorister, pianist, Sunday School Superintendent, and others, which are not mentioned in the records of the early church. All of these have been added as the church has needed them, and I do not doubt the leading of the Holy Spirit in their addition. As the churches have enlarged their teaching program the number of these has increased. All of them should be selected, and elected, by the church, and be responsible to the church for reports, work, etc.

The members of the church are those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptized into the fellowship of said church. They are known as believers. What they have believed has called them out from the world and they have united with others who have also been called out. There is a common salvation, and a common faith, and a common purpose. Only saved people should be in the churches, but all saved people should be

in them. The church was established by Jesus for His people, and everybody who is in the family should be in the home. No use of a child living the life of a tramp, when the doors of his rightful home are open, with food enough and to spare. The church is the natural living place of the believer, and only within it can he give the kind of cooperation, and do the kind of service, that his new life in Christ demands.

The government of the church is congregational. Matthias was chosen by the ballots of members of the church. The deacons were elected by "the multitude of the disciples". After they had been elected they set them before the apostles for ordination. The Jerusalem council was a meeting of the whole church at Jerusalem with some messengers from Antioch, and possibly another church, or two. The descriptive chapter has such phrases as, "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church", and also, "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church", and again, "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul". And the letter of counsel which was written began with, "The apostles, and, elders and brethren send greetings unto the brethren". There was no pressure from anybody, but a plain, open and free discussion of a question of great importance to the churches.

Baptist work must be congregational and cooperative. It must be congregational in the local

churches, and cooperative in the field of more general interest. Churches, associations, and conventions must never be controlled or *bossed* by any man, or group of men. The meetings must always be open and free. Delegates to meetings must always be elected by the church, and the church must be informed of the results of such meeting from the delegates. All matters of church life must be decided by free and open discussion; for the minute Baptist churches lose their independent sovereignty they at once cease to be Baptist churches, after the New Testament pattern. There must be no control, or right of appeal, beyond the local church, and each one must be a unit within itself. Any form of ecclesiasticism beyond that is not of New Testament origin, and since Baptists have no authority beyond the scriptures they cannot recognize more than that.

Church financing must be voluntary. Many people practice giving the tithe, and it is a most commendable practice, but the New Testament does not enjoin it. In Matthew twenty three and twenty three Jesus used the example of the tithe to condemn the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, but then tells them that they should have paid them, since it was a regulation of the Jewish law. The same lesson is taught in Luke eleven and forty two. In Luke eighteen the Pharisee boasts of having given the tithe of all that he possesses, but he is not commended for it. In Hebrews seven a dis-

cussion of the tithe is given comparing the Levitical priesthood with that of Melchizedek. The giving of the tithe is probably emphasized because as Baptists we are very weak in giving and to reach the standard of the tithe would provide ample funds for all our work. It would certainly help us as individuals and as churches.

In first Corinthians sixteen and two is a wonderful plan for financing the work of the church. It says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as, God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come". Regular giving on the Lord's day; the amount to be decided by your own prosperity, under the guidance of God! Never can beat that, and if honestly followed will beat the tithe, both in amount and in the joy of giving it. In second Corinthians nine, verses six, seven and eight the apostle also lays the matter of purposeful giving on their hearts, calling to their attention the blessings which will come from it. In second Corinthians and chapter eight he also gives us some counsel on the matter of fairness and equality in church finances. The experience of liberal Christians is that when you give as the book advises you'll always have some to give; the work of the church will be amply provided for; and you'll be a happy and useful Christian. There has never been a stingy Christian who was happy, nor a liberal one who was not.

The mission of the church is to make disciples of all the nations. Jesus gave that order and we have only to obey it. The commission was preceded by His statement that the Father had given to Him all power both in Heaven and in earth. On a basis of that power He authorizes His disciples to go out into all the world and make more disciples. And He promises to be with them in that endeavor as long as the world stands. They are to take His message and teach it, "Whatsoever I have commanded you". They are to enlist followers on the basis of the gospel message; baptize them, on a basis of their experience, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and then teach them to observe all the things He has commanded to be observed. It is a challenging task, and the church works at it, in season and out.

The services or meetings of the church may vary with different churches. In Hebrews ten and twenty five we read, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is". Paul mentions them meeting on the Lord's day, while in Acts it says they continued daily with one accord. There should certainly be the regular services on the Lord's day, for no Christian should ever be content to fail to worship at least once on Sunday. There will be many more who will want the evening service also, and certainly the midweek service of prayer. The church program of teaching will determine any additional services, but in most churches these will be the minimum. Many

churches do much social work in the communities, and that type of work should be used as a contributor to the regular worship service. The dead are brought to the church for a funeral service, and that part of the church ministry can be made one of its most useful fields. Most of our churches now have a full program of teaching through the Sunday School, and also of training through the various young peoples' organizations. The women of the church also have their program of missions. There are also occasional wedding ceremonies performed in the church; and while there is no record that either the Lord or His disciples ever performed a wedding ceremony, or any evidence that it was ever considered a prerogative of the church; it is nevertheless fitting to have our fine young people united in marriage by the pastor, and send them out with the prayers and good wishes of the church.

As Baptists, we should practice absolute loyalty to the church in the matter of attendance upon its services. The whole ministry of witnessing by the church is destroyed when those who belong to its membership continuously absent themselves from its regular services. In former days many churches practiced the rule of calling the roll of members at stated meetings, and if members were absent for any considerable number of times in succession, investgation was made as to the reason for such absence. The churches rightly assumed that if a member was possessed of the qualification

which originally made him a member, he would have the church in the proper place in his thinking and life.

We should also practice a proper respect toward the leader, or pastor, of the church. Since Baptist churches do not have any ecclesiastical power above the local church, it is very difficult to operate smoothly in this field. Many churches are torn by factions with reference to leadership. The early church at Corinth had this trouble, and Paul exhorts them to subject their likes for any one leader to the more general and more important devotion which they should have for Christ and His work. The pastor must be recognized as the divinely appointed leader of the flock, and must be suported as such. If we do not feel that his preaching, or his leadership, is of the quality which the church needs, we should be patient until there can be made proper adjustment in the matter of church leadership.

We should also practice a proper respect for the remaining officers in the church. The deacons have come in for a great deal of undeserved criticism, for most deacons are not only very fine men but do their work well, when properly instructed. Under the more modern system of rotation the quality of those chosen for deacons may not be as high as in former days, but, on the whole deacons in Baptist churches are worthy of more praise than criticism. The same may be said of the other officers,

most of whom, as the deacons, serve without pay and do not have a great deal of time to devote to their church duties.

And definitely we should have a proper *regard for the ordinances of the church.* In the chapter which follows the matter of the ordinances will be discussed in more detail, but it should be said in passing that no evidence which could be produced for testing the knowledge and training which Baptists have received, is more convincing than the attitude which our people have toward church ordinances. People who leave when the Lord's Supper is to be observed, or who fail to render proper respect when a new born soul is baptized, just don't know the importance which the Lord gave to these observances.

Well-informed Baptists also will be diligent with reference to *the objects which the church supports.* He will not be content to see the church with a one-sided program. No teaching in the New Testament is clearer than that which teaches that the brethren in Jerusalem were anxious about the needs of those in Macedonia and Galatia. And also a collection was taken for the poor saints at Jerusalem. Our work has been tardy in many instances, because we have failed to keep a proper balance in that which was kept for the work at home and that which was sent for the work in other fields. Both are important, and should be done, with a fair proportion of funds being given to each of them.

And we must be ever correct in *our practices toward the state.* We have made historic pronouncements on that point, and no genuine Baptist could ever fail to look with pride upon the position which Baptists have always held upon the relationship which the church should bear to the state. The discussion on Religious Liberty will deal with this most cherished tradition more fully, but no word of general counsel could be given to Baptists without reminding them that no lack of watchfulness is justified, at a time when forms of government are changed in a day, and loyalty to principle gives way to expediency.

And also we must remember that the paramount business of the church is *that of winning the lost.* That practice must have our first and finest devotion. We must never leave our first love. All the programs which we make; all the definite plans which we may employ; all the prayers which we may offer; and all the perseverance which we may command, must be dedicated to the business of winning the lost to Christ and His church. No other practice of the church must ever supersede that. It must ever and always be our chief task and joy.

I think then that Baptists may believe that a local New Testament church is the most important organization on earth; that its meaning is that of the "called out" ones being brought together in an organized capacity for the work of the Lord; that Jesus instituted His church on the band of

disciples who definitely believed in Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God; that Jesus personally guided and taught those who were to be the leaders in His church after His departure; that on the day of Pentecost the church was empowered and began its program of world evangelism; that the head of the church is Jesus; that its officers are pastor and deacons and such others as the needs of the church may determine; that its members are those who are saved by a belief in Jesus as the Son of God and their Savior, followed by baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that its government is congregational; that its financing is voluntary; that its mission is world evangelism and teaching; and that its meetings are for the purpose of worship and edification, and the proper promotion of those things which carry out the church program.

We should practice a proper loyalty in attendance upon its meetings; have the proper attitude and respect for its pastor; refrain from hurtful criticism toward the remaining officers of the church; have a correct regard for the ordinances; keep a sensible balance in the distribution of the funds to the different fields of work; render correct loyalty to the state; and be forever and always concerned that the first business of the church shall be that of winning the lost to Christ and the church, as is commanded us in the great commission. To such a church and program every Baptist should offer his hand and heart.

CHAPTER VIII

The Ordinances

Matthew	*3:16*
Acts	*8:38*
Acts	*9:18*
Acts	*18:8*
Acts	*19:5*
Romans	*6:4*
Galatians	*3:27*
Ephesians	*4:5*
Colossians	*2:12*
Mark	*14:22-26*
I Corinthians	*10:16-21*
I Corinthians	*11:23-30*

Church ordinances have been the point of separation for more people in the churches than any other one principle. Churches have divided into two churches because of it; associations have split and new associations have been organized because of inability to agree on the practice, or failure to practice, the ordinances in a way satisfactory to the majority. Many small groups of people are organized, calling themselves churches, because

they hold to some particular view with reference to the ordinances. And still other people refuse to practice the ordinances because they misinterpret the section in Colossians two where Paul condemns dependance upon ceremonial ordinances, given under the law, as a means to attainment of eternal life.

There are a great many Baptists who practice foot washing as a church ordinance. What we know as "Primitive" Baptists, and "Free Will" Baptists, are the most noteworthy of these groups. These two bodies have more than three thousand churches in America and nearly two hundred thousand members, each group being of almost the same numerical strength. They look upon the incident recorded in John thirteen as, if not a direct command, a very urgent appeal from Jesus to follow the practice which He had just performed. Also in first Timothy five and ten there is definite evidence that it was an accepted practice in the early churches.

The vast majority of Baptists, however, have not followed the practice of foot washing in the churches as an ordinance. They look upon the incident recorded in John thirteen as a very fine lesson in humility, but do not believe the Holy Spirit has seen fit to perpetuate the practice as of church authority, if indeed it was so considered in the beginning. It is held by those who follow its use that if two members will condescend to wash

the feet of each other on Sunday, they will hardly be found doing wrong things to each other on any other day. Its value as a promoter of fellowship they believe to be of sufficient importance that it should be emphasized and practiced. And it is also obvious that Jesus performed it for the purpose of teaching that in the Christian faith all believers are on a common level, regardless of their relative position in the affairs of the community in which they live. And for the teaching of such lesson it is a most beautiful example.

The ordinance of Baptism deserves the most careful consideration. Most all the denominations practice it in some way and for some motive. A great majority of those enrolled in church books have been baptized for the purpose of remission of sins, on the basis of the belief by their respective denomination that Baptism is essential to salvation. Baptism has been given such a place of importance in most church organizations that the scriptures concerning it have been misinterpreted, and the pattern of New Testament practice largely lost. The scriptures, however, are very clear with reference to it, and it is from that point of view that this discussion must proceed.

The New Testament points out most clearly the proper subject for Baptism. Such a one must be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ before that one is eligible for Baptism. Only such as have repented of sin, believed to the saving of the soul, been re-

generated by the Holy Spirit, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, are properly prepared to receive the ordinance. In Acts five and fourteen we read, "And *believers* were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women". They were believers before being baptized. In Acts two and forty one we read, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized". They received the word and believed on Christ before being baptized. Also in Acts eight and twelve, "But when they *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women". Nowhere do the scriptures teach that any but believers were ever baptized.

In the story of Philip and the Eunuch told in Acts eight there is positive evidence that the Eunuch was a *believer* before Baptism was ever administered. Philip had been instructing him in the way of life, and when the Eunuch becomes satisfied with the teaching, he expresses a desire to follow Christ in baptism. Then Philip, who was being definitely led by the Holy Spirit, tells him that if he believes with all his heart he may be baptized. And the Eunuch after a positive and definite statement of his belief in Jesus, based on the explanation of scripture by Philip, becomes a proper subject for baptism and receives such at the hands of Philip. He is not baptized in order to be saved, but because he is saved.

The mode of Baptism is also clear. In every place it is pictured as an immersion in water. In Matthew three and sixteen we have, "And Jesus when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water". Acts eight and thirty eight reads, "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him". No sense in going down into the water unless he was going to immerse him. In Romans six and three the apostle says, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life". A burial always signifies putting the object to be buried under the surface of the substance used for the purpose of covering.

The word itself means to immerse. All Greek-English lexicons give it so. Some years ago Dr. John T. Christian wrote leading Greek scholars in England and America asking them if there was an authoritative Greek-English lexicon that defined the word baptizo to mean to sprinkle or pour. Some of the answers follow and are very interesting and convincing. Professor H. W. Humphreys of Vanderbilt University said, "There is no standard Greek-English lexicon that gives sprinkle or pour as one of the meanings of the Greek word baptizo". From Professor W. S. Tyler of Amherst College we have, "I do not know of any good lexicon which gives sprinkling as a rendering of baptizo". Professor Dodge of the University of Michi-

gan replied, "There is no standard Greek-English lexicon that gives either sprinkle or pour as one of the meanings of the Greek word baptizo". Professor Flagg of Cornell University answered, "I know no lexicons which give the meaning you speak of for baptizo".

The replies from England were just as positive and convincing. Dr. H. Kynaston of the University of Durham said, "The word baptizo means to dip, or sink into water, not sprinkle. I know of no lexicon which gives sprinkle for baptize". Professor G. C. Warr of King's College replied, "Certainly the classical meaning of baptizo is to dip, not to sprinkle or pour". Professor John Stracham of Owen's College said, "I never, to my knowledge, met with the word in the literal sense of sprinkle, and I doubt if it has any such meaning". Professor G. E. Mamdin of the University of London also said, "I do not know of any Greek-English lexicon which gives the meaning to sprinkle, or pour. If any should do so, I should say it makes a mistake". Professor R. C. Webb of Cambridge University replied, "I do not know whether there is any authoritative Greek-English lexicon which makes the word mean sprinkle or pour. I can only say that such a meaning never belongs to the word in classical Greek".

Some quotations from other authoritative sources may serve as a good purpose. In the lexicon by Liddell and Scott we have, "Baptism, to dip in or

under water". Thayer's lexicon, "Baptism, to dip repeatedly, to immerse, submerge. An immersion in water". From a Greek lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine periods under date of 1870 we find, "Baptize, to dip, to immerse, to sink—There is no evidence that Luke and Paul and the other writers of the New Testament put upon the verb meanings not recognized by the Greeks". From the Encyclopedia Britannica, "The word is derived from the Greek to dip, or wash". From Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, "Baptism properly and literally means immersion". From Hastings Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels we have, "To use Pauline language his old man is dead and buried in the water, and he rises from his cleansing grave a new man. The full significance of the rite would have been lost had immersion not been practiced".

Some more familiar commentators may be quoted also. John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian church said, "The word baptize signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church". Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran church said, "Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated immerse. I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped". John Wesley, the founder of Methodism said, "Buried with Him by baptism—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion". Wall, a leading Episcopalian scholar said, "Immersion was in all probability the way in

which our blessed Savior, and for certain the way by which the ancient Christians received their baptism".

Dean Stanley, one of the most prominent of the Episcopal clergy of England, said, "For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of Baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word "baptize," that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water. The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the larger part of the apostolic language regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word". Cardinal Gibbons, Roman Catholic, says "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion, but since the twelfth century the practice of baptism by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than Baptism by immersion". The Encyclopedia Britannica says, "The usual mode of performing the ceremony was by immersion". The Council of Ravenna, in 1311, was the first council of the church to legalize sprinkling by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister. Brenner, a Roman Catholic writer said, "For thirteen hundred years was baptism an immersion of the person under water". In the "Sunday Visitor" one of the leading Roman Catholic papers in America under date of August fifth nineteen hundred and twenty

eight, we read, "It is true that immersion was the practice in the primitive church. Today, however, the church practices pouring".

The use of the unscriptural method of baptism came about because of a misinterpretation of its purpose. There would never have been any sprinkling or pouring for Baptism if there had not come about a belief that it was necessary to salvation. If it were necessary to salvation, and since all were born under sin, then it was the logical conclusion that they couldn't be saved unless they got baptism at some time or other in life. There was division of opinion as to when baptism should be administered. One group, of whom the Emperor Constantine was a follower, thought it should be postponed until the time of death, so that all sins could be washed away before death. Another group thought that it should be administered as quickly as possible after birth, because babies who died without baptism would be lost. The latter group, supported solidly by the clergy, finally gained the decision and babies were baptized.

The matter of sprinkling and pouring came about for matters of convenience. The earliest case of which we have any record was that of Novation in two hundred and fifty A. D. and originated in a baptism of the sick, and was not generally accepted as valid baptism. He was thought not to be able to recover and must be baptized before death. Since it was feared that dipping in water would be

too great an injury the easier method was adopted. Following that line of reasoning it was very easy to substitute sprinkling or pouring, for the New Testament method by immersion, on all those whom they chose to baptize. And a few hundred years thereafter the Catholic church officially made the easier and more convenient method the rule and practice of their church. The Greek Catholic church still immerses, and that fact becomes more impressive when it is considered that they have the Greek language for their services, and that is the original language of the New Testament. Recently, I asked a fine young lady of the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church if they still immersed in their church, and if they practiced the same mode with infants and adults. She gave a positive yes as to the fact that they immerse the babies, but said she didn't know about adults, for she had never seen one baptized.

And it must be remembered that the method of administering baptism was changed because the church got the idea that it had the power to change practices and establish policies which should guide the life of its members. It is most interesting to note that as long as the Bible was recognized as authority in the Christian religion there were extremely few, if any, cases where the New Testament teaching concerning baptism was emasculated. As soon as the Roman State united with the church and made it an official religion, then, and not until then, did the church begin its wholesale

denunciation of the positive teachings of the New Testament. After it considered its rulings to be more authoritative than the Scriptures, we immediately find the abuse of the doctrine of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the addition of other practices which have no sort of mention, or sanction, in the word which was given us by the Holy Spirit.

And when the reformation came on the groups who came out from the Roman Church were not of the disposition to scrap the ritualistic practices and launch out on a strictly New Testament program. Luther and Zwingli and Calvin all felt the need of strong state groups to support them in getting established with their new venture and, since the New Testament taught the separation of church and state, they could not risk so great a break with practices that their followers so well understood. Thus, they held on to state support for the purpose of establishment, and kept the practice of baptism which would most easily guarantee membership in their respective churches. In England state support was guaranteed in the fact that the break came because of a fight between the pope and the king, and the Anglican church was a state church by virtue of its leadership. There had been no scrap over baptism, and it was brought over as the Roman Church had been practicing it. There were a great many Christians, known as Anabaptists, who had never practiced the administration of Baptism in any except the New Testament way, but because of severe persecution and

annihilation their numbers had not become of sufficient strength to combat successfully the established hierarchy. So the reformation groups established their respective organizations partly on scripture, and partly on tradition, and in all cases retained the practice of infant baptism for the remission of sins.

It is worthy of notice that every one of these groups who practice infant baptism do so for the remission of sins. They either do so for the erasure of original sin, or perform the ceremony for the purpose of initiating a pilgrimage for the soul, which, with the addition of many other graces and works of merit, will finally at the end bring the soul to eternal life. At the council of Trent the Roman Catholic Church made this pronouncement, "Baptism is a sacrament instituted by Christ to wash away original sin, and all those we may have committed: to communicate to mankind the spiritual regeneration and grace of Jesus Christ, and to unite them to the living head. If any man shall say that baptism is not essential to salvation, let him be accursed. In baptism not only our sins are remitted, but all the punishment of sin and wickedness". John Wesley says, "It is certain that our church supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again. If infants are guilty of original sin, they cannot be saved in the ordinary way unless this be washed away by baptism". Since he was still a member of the Episcopal Church when this was written it is not clear

as to whether he spoke this of the mother church, or was interpreting the belief of the new societies which he was organizing and which became the Methodist Church.

In the current prayer book of the Episcopal Church we read a prayer which follows the baptism of one into that church, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this child (this thy servant) with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child, and to incorporate him into thy holy church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that he, being dead unto sin, may live unto righteousness, and being buried with Chrst in his death, may also be partaker of his resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of thy holy church, he may be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom; through Christ our Lord". In the shorter catechism of the Presbyterian Church we read, "Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament wherein Christ hath ordained the washing in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of the engrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his spirit, of adopton and resurrection unto eternal life". In interpreting this Dr. Hodge of Princeton says, "We are baptized in order that we may be united to Christ, and be made partakers of His benefits. This baptism unto repentance is a baptism that the remission of sins may be obtained". Dr. Nevin of Mercersbury Seminary says in

speaking of this same statement in the catechism, "The church makes us Christians by the sacrament of holy baptism, which she always held to be of supernatural force for that very purpose".

The Baptist reason for immersing a believer is that through the ordinance we may publicly declare the spiritual experience of the believer and his allegiance to Christ as Lord. It is an act of obedience necessary to church membership and Christian living. It declares, but in no sense obtains, the grace of God. When a believer is baptized he declares that because of his belief in the Christ he is dead to sin, buried to sin, and raised to walk in a new life. And the church which authorizes his baptism declares its belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And neither of these declarations made by baptism can be given in any way except by immersion. No such picture can ever come by sprinkling or pouring. Baptism, to Baptists, is not the christening of a child, which may have a good influence upon the parents; not an ecclesiastical ceremony in which the church declares the forgiveness of sins; not an initiatory practice which added to many other works and graces will finally bring the recipient to eternal life; but it is an outward expression of an inward experience, in which the one who is baptized declares that he has been born again, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus. And only one who is a conscious believer in Christ can make such declaration in the ordinance of Baptism.

And hard to understand is the position held by so many groups who say that baptism is so important that without it the soul will be lost, but that it makes no sort of difference as to the way it is administered. They call on the New Testament long and loud to back them up in the matter of its value, and then entirely disregard the New Testament in the matter of its administration. They admit that the New Testament does teach immersion for baptism, and that Jesus practiced immersion Himself; but by their practice of the ordinance declare that this same Jesus, whom they say is the head of their church, did not mean what He said when He told them to go out and make disciples, and baptize them by the only method that was ever heard of, or then known about. For I am sure no person would question the statement that baptism was first brought to the world by John the Baptist, and was practiced upon and approved by the Lord Jesus Christ, and at the same time was sanctioned by God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

It may not make any difference to many, but I believe its proper observance would be worth a foot pilgrimage of a thousand miles to one who had been born of the Spirit of God, and who understood the way that the Triune God approved of its performance. For they met together one day over on the banks of the Jordan, where a plain man of the desert was baptizing those who came with evidence in their hearts that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand. And the Father, and the Son and the Holy

Spirit that day gave unanimous approval of the work he was doing, and upon those whom he immersed in that liquid grave the Lord Jesus founded His church, to do His work, until He comes again.

Authority for baptism rests with the church. Jesus gave such authority to it in the great commission and those who were baptized into the early church were baptized by those whom the church directed to perform the ordinance. Jesus also recognized a divine authority when He went to the Jordan to demand baptism of one who had been sent of God for the purpose. John was a part of the divine program, for his work as a messenger and one who would prepare the way had been foretold by one whom God had told to give the message.

When I was a college student a fine pastor, who was also a student, asked me to come to one of the churches which he served and assist him in a meeting. I did so, and at the close of the meeting he asked the church to authorize me to assist him in baptizing the half hundred candidates who were ready to be baptized. The church, by a regular motion, and second, and vote, so authorized, and I assisted in the baptism. That local church was responsible for the baptism of those candidates who had asked for baptism at its hands; and my ordination to the ministry by another local church of the same faith and order, in another state, did not authorize me to assist in the baptism of those candi-

dates unless, and until, that local church, of whom those redeemed souls had requested baptism, should authorize me to do so.

A Baptist pastor, with little experience and less information, told me, not long ago, that he was seriously considering demanding rebaptism of a man who was bringing a letter from another regular Baptist church, but whose pastor he considered to be a modernist. If he had known the truth, he would have been sure of the fact that one who has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal savior; has asked for and received New Testament baptism at the hands of a local New Testament church has been baptized; no matter if the church had subsequently called a pastor whose beliefs didn't square with his idea of fundamentals. When I questioned his contemplation of such request he replied that he had to be very careful who they received into the church. I reminded him that in that case he was obligated to be careful about whom they didn't receive into the church. He had just forgotten that the authority for valid baptism rests with the local church.

And as long as there is a gospel dispensation; and as long as Jesus remains in the midst of His churches; and as long as the Holy Spirit guides them in their work; just that long will there be people who will believe in and administer the ordinance of baptism in the correct and New Testament way. The light grew very dim while the

church was in the wilderness, and the hosts of error were on the march; but as the light shines again in ever increasing certainty the doctrines and practices of the New Testament will be more positively embraced, and more correctly administered. And baptism, in such a blessed season, will find its rightful place of importance and correct method of administration.

The Lord's Supper was instituted just prior to the death of Jesus and has been constantly observed since that time. It is commemorative of His death and sufferings. It was instituted at the close of the last Passover meal which Jesus ate with His disciples, and was intended to be a memorial to our deliverance from sin, as the Passover was a memorial to the deliverance of Israel from bondage. In Matthew twenty six the record says, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink of it ye all; For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins". And Paul in First Corinthians eleven says, "For I have received of the Lord that which I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had

supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come".

There are differences of opinion as to the meaning, or value, of this memorial supper. The Roman Catholic view is that when the priest consecrates the bread and wine they become the actual body and blood of Jesus. In the celebration of the mass he is purported to bring again the blood and body of Jesus for the purpose of cleansing and forgiveness of sins. The adoration of the host has been instituted, and the receiving of the communion at mass is considered by most informed Catholics as the impartation of life in a real sense. It furnishes to the loyal Catholic his opportunity for growth in the Christian life, and is his chief grace given for a chance to get to Heaven. To be refused the communion becomes to a Catholic a serious matter, and a source of great grief and disappointment. Other Catholic bodies hold to the same theory of transubstantiation and benefits.

Other denominations believe that even though the bread and wine do not become the actual body and blood of Jesus, that there is a real presence existing there when the sacrament is observed. More formal groups put more emphasis upon its mysterious element, while more liberal ones give it a more practical meaning. But in all of these

cases there is the belief that there is received a blessing in the taking of the communion which cannot be gotten from any other observance. It is a grace to them, which gives help on the road to eternal life and divine blessing.

The Baptist position concerning the Lord's supper is that it is a memorial supper designed to call to our attention the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins and salvation. Two definite things are taught in the scriptures as to the observance of the supper. The first is that we do it in remembrance of Him. Each time we partake of the supper we remember what Jesus did for us in His dying on the cross for our sins. And the second is that each time we partake of it we declare unto the world that we show forth, or subscribe to the doctrine and belief of His atoning death until He comes again. When we put flowers on the graves of our loved ones, or go to the family reunion, we remember the good deeds of our departed loved ones and determine in our minds that we will strive to emulate the fine qualities which our loved ones displayed. In a stronger sense, that is what happens when we observe the Lord's supper. As we partake of the bread and wine, which are symbols of the body and blood of Jesus, we remember the perfect life and sacrificial death of Jesus. We come away from the service more determined to live the kind of life which His suffering and sacrifice would require of us.

We do not believe that the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Jesus under any kind of church ministry. The words, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood," we believe to mean that the bread and wine were symbolic of His body and blood. For reverently may we ask—Was it the actual body and blood? Did He draw any blood from His veins, or was there any flesh taken from His body? For obviously it was not necessary for Him to perform any miracle to produce His presence since He was already there. In John six Jesus makes it clear that it was symbolical. He makes the illustration with manna given from Heaven to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and says that just as God sent the manna to them to save their lives, so God has sent Him to save spiritual life. And He tells them that He is the bread that never dies, but that the bread which was physical would not preserve life forever. He clearly means it to be a symbol of spiritual values.

The whole surrounding points to a symbol. The supper was given to supplant the Passover, and to mean to the Christian who had a new spiritual life and experience of delivery from sin, just what the Passover meant to the Jew, who had not had this new experience. And the Jews do not believe the Passover reproduces the actual elements of deliverance. They have the bread which represents the manna sent from Heaven, but they do not make the slightest pretense that it is more than a symbol; they have meat that represents quail from Heaven,

but only as a symbol; they have a representation of the blood that was put on the door posts, but they do not consider it to be transubstantiated into the actual blood; they have every symbolic representation of the happenings of the Exodus, but no claim is made that it has more than a symbolic meaning.

So Jesus, who knew all of these things so well, established His memorial supper, so that all of those who came to Him in all the years to come, might partake of these symbols of His shed blood and broken body, and remember their deliverance from the power and bondage and death of sin. So He really said that this is the representation of my body which is given for you, and this is the symbol of my blood which is shed for you. And the ordinance becomes so beautiful and meaningful when it is given in that correct light! Those who have laden its observance with so many unscriptural and unnecessary implications have made it to become a prescribed observance for the purpose of the accumulation of merit, rather than a beautiful reminder of the bounties of His matchless grace.

The Lord's Supper is not a test of fellowship. There should be beautiful fellowship in the church, but we must remember that we are taking the communion for the purpose of remembering our Lord and not our brother. Many good people have been kept away from the table because of this erroneous idea. Neither is it a test of worthiness.

Many Christians say that they have never had the supper because they have never felt worthy of taking it. The passage which mentions taking it unworthily has reference to the manner of its observance, and not to the personal fitness of the partaker. The reading of the entire chapter of first Corinthians eleven makes that very clear. The unworthy discernment of the Lord's body seems to be the condemning sin.

The frequency of its observance is a matter for each local church to decide. Some churches have it too often and some do not observe it often enough, if at all. It should always be remembered that there are those in every church who will receive a blessing from its observance and, even though that number may be few, they still have a right to this type of ministry. There is the probability of a deadening familiarity with the sublime when it is observed too often. It gets to be a matter of course, and in that way loses its value and meaning. In those churches where it is considered to be a means of grace, it of course is observed much oftener. For purposes of rememberance, and the declaration of the message of His death until He comes again, it is not needed as often. In most churches once per quarter is sufficiently frequent, and in some others that may be too often. The local church must decide that.

In some isolated sections Baptists are still accused of being close communionists. And it may be brief-

ly said in answer to that charge that all churches that practice the observance of the Lord's supper do not allow any person to come to the table who has not been baptized; that Baptists hold that Christians have not been baptized who have not been immersed upon a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the authority of a New Testament church; and that since they have not been baptized they cannot be invited to the Lord's supper, which is also as much an ordinance under church authority as is Baptism. And the further fact may be that we mght have less fuss and criticism about the matter of eligible participants, if each local church attended to its own observances for its own members, and let every other local church do likewise. A member of a church who is not able to get to his own church often enough to get the communion should move his letter to one of more accessibility. There may be exceptions to this rule, but the exceptions will be rare.

A final word about the Lord's supper is that it should be observed. So many Baptist churches are so weak in this matter of the Lord's supper. We have allowed its abuses to drive us away from it's real purpose and teaching. It centers our thoughts devotionally on Christ, and preaches in a very definite way that Jesus is the bread of life and that His blood cleanses us from all sin. It does not save us from sin, and is not a grace which will add one whit to our inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in Heaven for us; but it

does give to us a new and continual appreciation of what Jesus did for us in His death on the cross. It should be observed by all our churches with regularity and devotion.

So then as Baptists we must believe that Baptism as an ordinance deserves the most careful consideration, being commanded by the Lord Jesus; that the proper subject for baptism is one who has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal saviour; that the mode of baptism is definitely the immersion in water of a believer upon the authority of the church; that the scriptures do not teach that baptism is necessary to salvation; that the mode cannot rightly be changed for matters of convenience; that as long as the Bible was considered as the authority for practices in the church, the method of administration was always that of immersion; that Baptists believe that in baptism we publicly declare the spiritual experience of the believer and his allegiance to Christ as Lord; that the authority for baptism rests with the local church; and that baptism is of such divine sanction that its correct observance will be preserved to the end of the age.

Concerning the Lord's Supper we should believe that it was instituted by Jesus just prior to His death, and is commemorative of His death, and suffering; that large numbers of churched people attach to its observance spiritual significance which the scriptures do not support; that the Baptist po-

sition is that it is a memorial supper designed to call to our attention the death of Jesus on the cross; that it is neither a test of fellowship, nor worthiness; that the frequency of it's observance shall be determined by the local church; that Baptists are only as close in communion as the New Testament requirement; that only baptized believers shall partake of the communion; and that it should be observed with regularity and devotion. The ordinances of the New Testament, properly understood and practiced by the churches, bring continual joy and happiness to all those who share in the work of the Lord.

CHAPTER IX

The Second Coming

Matthew	*24:30-39*
Mark	*14:62*
Luke	*21:27*
Acts	*1:6-11*
I Thes.	*4:13-17*
II Thes.	*2:1-4*
James	*5:7-8*
II Peter	*3:4-10*

The doctrine of the second coming of Jesus is a very prominent one in the New Testament. No other doctrine is mentioned more, both in direct statement and in assumption. All of the New Testament writers have it constantly in mind; and there is every evidence that all of them believed it to be an event, not only of great importance, but of almost immediate fulfillment. So anxious and eager were they about it that Paul found it necessary to write to some of the churches warning them of the danger of stressing that event to the exclusion of the other positive commands of the New Testament.

The fact of the second coming is well established by the scriptures. In Acts one and eleven we read, "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven". In John fourteen and three Jesus said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself". In John twenty one and twenty two Jesus again said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee". Paul, in first Thessalonians four and sixteen and seventeen says, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord". The fact of the great event is assured, if we can believe the plain statements of the New Testament.

The manner of the second coming is also clear. The book says, "shall so come in like manner". We only have to know the manner in which he went away to know the manner in which He shall return. In Acts one and nine the manner is given. It reads, "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight". He therefore went away on a cloud, and will come back in the same way. Paul adds to the picture in first Thessalonians four and sixteen by saying that a shout and a trump shall be heard, and a resurrection of

the dead who are in Christ shall be had. He does not contradict anything in Acts one, but adds more detail.

The time of the second coming is not known. In Acts one and seven we read that Jesus told His disciples, when they enquired of Him concerning the restoration of the kingdom, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power". And also in Matthew twenty four and thirty six Jesus tells His followers, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only". Many believe that Jesus in the flesh did not know, but that Jesus out of the flesh did know. There is not any scripture that teaches that we know, or may know. God has always reserved to Himself that part of His omniscience which He thought it not best for His creatures to have, and this case is no exception. The first pair, in the garden suffered much because of their vanity in trying to assume knowledge not intended for them, and we do well to profit by their experience. We just simply do not know the time of His coming and it is not intended that we should.

There is a great deal of confusion with Bible readers concerning this matter. I think I may best describe it by relating a conversation which I had with a northern Baptist chaplain about it. He told me that his convention was virtually torn asunder because of opposing views on the second coming,

and the incidents following it. He said that the brethren had practically made the matter of a pre or post millennial belief, a test of fellowship. He told me that there had developed the most unusual extremes in the working out of the details concerning their theories. The brethren, he thought, had considered it incumbent upon them to subscribe to some scheme with reference to eschatology, and they had gathered information from many sources which they had used in making for themselves a program which was satisfactory to them.

This conversation took place while I was on a tour of duty in the Chief of Chaplains Office in Washington, D. C., and a few Sundays after that I went to one of the Baptist churches there for Sunday School and the worship service. The lesson for that morning was the story of the Good Samaritan, and I went to an adult Bible class in the hope that I would get some help in better understanding that fine story. When I got to the class room I found that the teacher had displayed there a great series of charts which he said represented in detail some things which were about to happen in the world. His pictures were taken almost entirely from references in the Old Testament; and very clearly the passages which he cited had definite reference to the first coming of Jesus, but he chose to place the interpretation of them over at the end of the age. During the discussion of his lesson on prophecy, some member of the class inter-

posed an experience in which he said he awoke near midnight a few nights before to find that his wife was not present, and he became frightened, thinking that perhaps the "rapture" had taken place while he was asleep. The good teacher of the class sought to console him by telling him that if such happened it would be only the fulfillment of scripture, for it said that one would be taken and the other left. Before the class hour was completed the teacher secured a vote from the class authorizing him to go ahead and complete his teachings in prophecy, rather than return to the international lessons for the quarter, which was just beginning.

The pathos and the pity of the situation was greatly increased when I found in conversation with the good man, after the class period, that he had a beautiful and genuine experience of salvation and the new birth, and that he really was in love with the work of his church. I found him to be a victim of the teachings of a group of people known as "Jehovah's Witnesses," and an additional bit of instruction from literature received from groups calling themselves "Adventists," of various types and persuasions. He had the idea that it was incumbent upon him to work out a scheme for the final days of the age, which he was positive were immediately to be upon us. And then I remembered that Jesus said that false prophets would arise who would, if possible, deceive the very elect. And my friend and teacher was in that group who were and are being deceived.

And I have found that this kind of situation has had the tendency to make the group who do not wish to be classed as premillenarians get further over on the other end of the line. Many of them have gone so far as to deny any literal and physical return of Jesus. When they have denied that, it has been easy for them to scrap the teaching with reference to the virgin birth and the atonement, and they soon find themselves teaching salvation by culture and good works. They adopt the graces for salvation rather than grace, and the church becomes to them a social organization rather than one for the preaching of the gospel for the salvation of souls, and the edification of those who are saved.

I think it should be said however, that there are very many fine and intelligent Baptists who represent each of these extreme views. There is a tendency to believe that fundamentalists are not the well posted group of Baptists. That impression is not correct. Some of our very finest and best educated people are not only fundamentalists with respect to cardinal Baptist teachings but also believe in the premillennial view of eschatology. And while I do not agree with these brethren in all the schemes which they have evolved concerning the details of the second coming, yet I do have the profoundest respect for their opinion and the greatest admiration for their loyalty and devotion to all the teachings of the New Testament. For I have definitely observed that these men who may

be considered to be extreme in the matter of events immediately following His return, are nevertheless solid in their belief in all the Bible truths concerning salvation, the church, the ordinances, and other New Testament teachings. And the churches which these men represent are also found to be alive and active in the work of the Kingdom.

I am convinced that our Baptist people, in this period of uncertainty, need to exercise the greatest care in establishing themselves on a sound basis concerning the second coming. It is not always best to stay in the middle of the road on any question as important as this, but I am sure that a great deal of unnecessary misunderstanding can be avoided if we do not listen to all the noises which we hear about a detailed set-up to which many think we must subscribe. Baptists are going to be placed at the center of the group in this country who will hold to New Testament teaching as the foundation for their work, and both sanity and success depend upon a sane and sensible interpretation of this great doctrine of the second coming of Christ.

Much of this confusion about the second coming is occasioned by a failure to agree on the mission of the churches in the world. One group has the belief that the churches are to preach the gospel until the whole lump of human society has been leavened, and the teachings of Jesus have become the rule and guide for nations and men. In the belief of this group Jesus will return for the pur-

pose of judgment and reign, and there will not be any literal reign of one thousand years in which there will be the conversion of the Jews, and through them the remainder of the world. This group holds that the whole program and teaching of Jesus presupposes the permeation of human society with His teachings and principles.

The other major group believe that the mission of the churches is to preach the gospel for the purpose of selecting out of the world those who are to make up the bride, the Lamb's wife. With them there is not to be a general turning to the truth and the teachings of Jesus are not to permeate the lump of human society. They believe that Jesus will come to call from the world His saints, in what they call the "Rapture", and that after a brief period of tribulation He shall come with His saints to reign and convert the Jews and the world. After this reign of a thousand years the final judgment will take place, and the New Heaven and the New Earth will join hands. There are, of course, varying opinions in matters of detail in both of these plans, but these are the general outlines of the two schools of thought.

There are those who believe that the writing of Revelation was done for the immediate period of persecution through which the church was then passing; that the highly symbolic language used had reference to those days, and was used with a meaning which only Christians could understand;

and that all of the book has long since been fulfilled. Others think that the devil was chained during the thousand years from five hundred to fifteen hundred A. D., during which time the Roman Church was predominant, and that now we are in the period of his final assault on the church. The "falling away" is said to be the protestant reformation, and the return of the Lord will come when those who have departed from the true faith have returned. Still others believe that the chaining of Satan has been done by the laws which Christians have been able to enact, and that the final contest with him is near at hand.

In the midst of all these ideas and interpretations what may Baptists safely believe? A careful study of the many theories, and a more careful study of the New Testament, leads me to the definite conviction that there is positively no need for Baptists to be divided and unduly disturbed over the question of the second coming of Jesus. There must be some ground on which we may stand in definite brotherly love and good fellowship, for dissension and division over the matter is a very foolish and unnecessary practice.

1. In approaching the study of this great doctrine we must ever keep in mind the great Baptist principle of freedom of interpretation of the scriptures. That is one of our great cardinal Baptist principles, and we must allow our brethren the same privilege which we wish for ourselves. I may

not agree with my brother on what he believes concerning the word, but I cannot be true to my Baptist principle unless I am willing to allow him to make his interpretation of the word in the light of whatever he finds to be its truth. His interpretation may seem very foolish to me, but I must allow him to have it, and love and fellowship him in spite of it.

2. We may be sure that Jesus established His church on earth for the purpose of preaching His truth and bringing men from darkness to light on a basis of man's acceptance of that truth. The salvation of men is an individual matter, and society is only renovated and made better as more and more men come to know the truth as it is in Christ. There is no wholesale scheme for bringing nations into the knowledge of the truth, and no legislative or social program can ever be effective, except as individual men and women come to the support of a program of righteousness, based on a belief in, and an acceptance of, the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal saviour, and His teachings as the guide and rule of their lives.

3. Whether, or not, the coming of Jesus is imminent, does not absolve us from the obligation to make disciples of as many men as possible. If I should believe that the state of the world is rapidly getting worse and worse, and that Jesus was quickly coming to bring an end to the present dispen-

sation; I would still be bound under His great commission to press the battle for righteousness with all the strength at my command. Whatever may be our belief as to the last things, we are not justified in any cessation of the work assigned. For the only definite setting of time which we have in our New Testament is, "and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come". Whatever may be our interpretation of the meaning of a "witness unto all nations"; of one thing we may be certain—since He hasn't returned, it hasn't been done. And we are definitely obligated to do it.

4. There is to be a visible, literal, return of the Lord Jesus. The New Testament is definite in that, and that event is the one toward which all others point. There may not be universal agreement as to the details of His coming, but all Baptists, since they have no authority but their Bible, must believe in the return of Jesus in the same manner in which He went away. Jesus Himself said He would return, and all those who wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave us the same message. We cannot believe otherwise and be true to His own word and promise.

5. During times of great stress and strain, similar to the one through which we have just passed the doctrine of the second coming is emphasized, more than in normal times. The early disciples

had just witnessed great events of mighty power. There had been the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the day of Pentecost all in rapid succession, and they looked for the second coming to be immediate. Church history reveals that during periods of great persecution such as the crusades, the inquisition, the reformation, and others, the saints have longed and looked for His appearance. The Jews, especially have revived their messianic hope during their periods of stress. We have had two horrible wars in thirty years; nations have risen and fallen in rapid succession; atomic power has been discovered and used; Jews have been slaughtered by the millions; and the whole world order is in a state of chaos.

6. Because of these rapid and important events many serious and honest Christians feel that some great revealing of God's power is not far distant. Many believe that just as at the end of the first two thousand years God changed the process and made a special race, under the leadership of Abraham, to be the bearers of His law and commands; and just as at the end of the second two thousand years God changed the process and made His only begotten Son, and His Holy Spirit, the agents for the giving of His grace; so shall the end of the third two thousand years find Him changing the order of the working of His will. And these good people have worked out for themselves a system of events which they believe fit such a feeling.

7. The second coming of Jesus definitely means the triumph of His church. That is true whether we be pre or post or pro or no millenialists. The book of Revelation is very definite in that guarantee. The whole message of the book is the ultimate triumph of the Bride of Christ. The conflicts of His churches are very definitely described throughout the Revelation given to John, and the final triumph and reunion of Him and His church is definitely assured. We may rest assured, from the message of this final book of the Bible, that what Jesus organized His church to accomplish will be done, in spite of persecutions, trials, and tribulations.

8. And in the spirit of the highest reverence may I suggest that God is not pushed for time. He has all the time He needs for working out His plan for His world. We make a great mistake when we endeavor to place limits upon those movements which are planned and executed by His will. In Psalms ninety we are reminded, "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night". He says a thousand years are but a day with God. In second Peter the third chapter and the eighth verse we read, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day". God is not bound by time. He will give the word, and His son will return, whenever He Himself in His infinite wisdom chooses to give the command.

9. Since we do not know the time of His coming we should be in a state of constant watchfulness for His return. No Christian should ever lose sight of the fact that His return may be at any moment, and we must be always ready for that great event. In Matthew twenty five and thirteen Jesus said, "Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh". Since we know He is coming, and do not know when it will be, we must always be ready and watching.

10. The churches should never cease to emphasize the fact of the second coming. So many preachers never mention it! Nothing would do more to enliven and make more genuine the work of our churches than a regular reminder of the fact of the second coming of Jesus. Baptists should never allow all the impossible dogmas which have been built up around a misinterpretation of this great New Testament truth, to drive them away from its certainty and importance. As people of the Bible we cannot neglect one of its most important teachings. The churches must get everybody ready for His return that they possibly can, and to remind hearers of His coming is one of the ministers most profitable privileges.

11. At the coming of Jesus there will be a resurrection. No millennium theory ever denies that. One group may believe that it will only be the saved, and another may believe that it means everybody; but all of them admit that at least the re-

deemed will be resurrected and will join Christ for a habitation with Him. And there will be the giving of rewards to the righteous, and the judgment for the wicked. Whether you believe it will run over a period of more than a thousand years, or whether you believe it to all happen in rapid succession, does not change the fact of the happenings. The time element is not nearly so important, as the fact that He is coming and that only the redeemed profit by His coming.

12. As Baptists we cannot afford to allow ourselves to be sidetracked from the great central task of winning men to Christ and teaching them to observe the things that Christ commanded. We are not to minimize the importance of the second coming of Jesus, any more than we are to fail to emphasize any of the other clearly taught doctrines of the New Testament; but we are not to be enamoured by false teachings of groups who have clearly mixed the practices and peoples coming under the provisions of law, with those coming under the dispensation of grace. We must be kind to those with whom we do not agree, but we must never fail to be loyal to the teachings of the New Testament, and our responsibilities under it. Our duty is to be ready for His return, and get everybody else ready that we can; but we must not allow present day events, as terrible as they may seem, to cause us to forget that the time of His coming is in the hands of God, and we are only to do His will and wait for our deliverance at His coming.

CHAPTER X

Heaven and Hell

Matthew	*6:9*
Matthew	*11:25*
Matthew	*10:20*
Luke	*1:23*
Luke	*14:1-2*
Philippians	*21:3*
John	*23:15*
Revelation	*9:43*
Revelation	*16:23*
Mark	*20:3*

The question of the reality of Heaven and Hell is inherent in the fact of salvation. The scriptures are definite and positive in the teaching that Jesus came to the world; that He was incarnate in the flesh; that He went to the cross to die for our sins; that in His death He paid the penalty of sin and made a way of escape for all those who will believe on Him; and that all those who do believe are saved and sealed unto the day of redemption. The

scriptures are definite also in the teaching that those who do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are condemned already. Sin separates from God, and only as men accept the plan which He made as a way of escape will they be able to come back to Him. All the story and teaching of the Bible is an unfolding of this plan of salvation and its work and results in the lives of men.

The logical and inescapable conclusion of such a statement of facts is that since men are saved, or lost, on a basis of their belief and acceptance of the plan which Jesus made for their salvation, then there must be a definite and a decided difference in them both here and hereafter. It would be next to impossible to conceive that a just and righteous God would send His only begotten Son to the world, and make Him the object of shame and spite and suffering and death, and through that death give to men a plan for their deliverance; and then make no difference in the final and eternal state of those who recognized His plan and program, and those who did not. That kind of position does not stand up under any kind of reasonable scrutiny.

And I am just as sure that most of, or at least very much of, the confusion that exists on this matter of the final abode and disposition of all individuals, comes about because of the uncertainty of so many people on the matter of their status here and now. For obviously if people do not know

when they are saved, they do not know when they are lost. If the question of salvation, which gives eternal life, is a hit and miss affair; if one cannot know when he believes to the saving of the soul; if he is on the highway today and in the wilderness tomorrow; if his experience has brought so little assurance to him that he is not sure of its efficacy; then of course his thinking about future events, and their effect on his eternal destiny, will be hazy and unstable.

I think it could be said, without any fear of successful contradiction, that all the theories about purgatories, and places or restitution, and periods of waiting, and other such ideas about the happenings and conditions after death, came about after earlier church leaders turned from the doctrine of the certainty of salvation by grace, to the promise of salvation by works. The swapping of the teachings of Paul and Augustine, for that of Thomas, marked the beginning of the elaborate and tedious theories with reference to the erasure of the sins which we do not have forgiven here, and which must be cared for in the hereafter. And this same error in the fundamental teaching of the Bible about salvation has led many of our finest people into supporting theories and formulas that have placed almost entire emphasis upon some future scheme of punishment or penance, to the exclusion of the advocacy of the truthful doctrine of the Bible that men are saved instantaneously and eternally by believing in the finished work of Christ.

Neither does a correct view of Heaven and Hell compromise the love of God. Many people say that God is too good to send people to hell. But God does not send men to hell—they go of their own accord. The love of God is manifested in His giving the choicest and most loved possession in all of Heaven for the purpose of giving to man his chance to escape the penalty of sin. And for God to make it impossible for man to go to hell, if man so chooses to do, would be for God not only to violate the very difference He made in creating man with power to choose, and therefore above His other created beings—but also He would be nullifying the plan for redemption which He made in Jesus. If man's refusal to believe on the Lord Jesus and recognize the work of the cross does not make any difference in his spiritual status, then all of our preaching and teaching is vain.

Another of the prevalent questions asked in an attempt to evade the doctrine of hell is the old one of what will happen to those who never hear about Jesus and His work. They ask the question—Will God judge them on a basis of their acceptance or rejection of Jesus even though they have not had an opportunity to hear about Him? The question is foolish in its very asking. The matter of man's eternal condition depends entirely upon whether he believes or does not believe. In Acts sixteen and thirty one the jailor was told, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou stalt be saved". And in Romans ten and fourteen Paul asks the question,

"And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Of course they could not be condemned for something they did not know anything about, or had never heard about. God is too just for that.

I am perfectly sure that in the great foreknowledge and predestinating grace of God He will take care of those who do not have opportunity to hear about the good news of salvation. It may be that they will be tested on what He knows they would have done had the gospel been presented to them, or He may have another day and dispensation for them. I am not worrying unduly over that end of it. The first pair on earth were driven from the garden because they sought to appropriate to themselves that part of God's omniscience which He did not intend for them to have. He will take care of that in His own good time and way. The one thing that I am convinced about is that men and women who do have an opportunity to believe on Christ will live eternally, either in Heaven or in Hell, on a basis of what they do with Jesus who is the Christ.

Another disturbing element in this doctrine of Heaven and Hell is that many people look upon the dividing line as the matter of the church. They see so many churched people who are no different in their living from those who are not churched, that they cannot figure out how those in the churches could go to Heaven, when there is no

evidence that they are any different from those on the outside. Very unfortunately the church cannot be made the line of demarcation. There are very many people in the churches who are not saved, and there are a very few who are not in the churches who are saved. All of us in the churches should live right, but we don't. The matter is very clearly explained in Romans the seventh chapter. The dividing line is very definitely those who are saved as going to Heaven, and those who are not saved as going to Hell.

The Bible teaches that Heaven is a place. It is the centralized habitation of good. It is not merely an inward state of being. In John fourteen and one Jesus said, "I go to prepare a *place* for you". In the story of Lazarus in the sixteenth of Luke the place is represented as being where Abraham is, for Lazarus is pictured as reclining in his bosom. I am aware of the contention that this parable is only one of the comparative Jewish and Gentile appropriation of the gospel, but, even so, it teaches the primary lesson that Heaven is a place in which those who go there are comforted. In the book of Revelation John is asked to come up hither, and in Heaven a door was opened and John went in to see the drawing and dialogue of the things which he had already seen since his birth; the things which were then happening; and the things which were going to happen thereafter. It was a place which he entered for the vision and revelation that Jesus

was giving to him. Heaven is the place from which emanates all the good which ever comes to our world. For God, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and the saved who have gone on before make it the habitation of all that is good.

And also Hell is a place. The same story in the sixteenth of Luke teaches that. It reads, "And in Hell he lifted up his eyes". In second Peter two and four the angels that sinned are said to have been cast down to hell. It is a place of retribution for evil deeds. It is the centralized location of all that is evil, and from it emanates all the evil influences that come to the world. His satanic majesty is the center of it, and the ruling spirit. He appeared in the garden to tempt our first parents, and John is given a picture of him when he is finally chained and thrown into the bottomless pit. And in the book of Revelation the fourteenth chapter and the ninth verse we are told who are the residents of that place, and who fall down and do the will of the devil. It reads, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire". That statement definitely says that the line of separation is in the matter of one's saved or lost condition here.

There are many who find it very difficult to believe in a literal hell. They profess to believe that the words "fire and brimstone" are only symbolical and do not really mean a literal physical burning.

And they have a perfect right to their belief as free New Testament Christians. This may be said about that, however—that the greatest anguish in the world is not physical but mental. The torment of mind is many times more terrible than any kind of physical torture could be. These brethren have not lessened the real meaning of hell in such an interpretation, they have heightened it. Hell is the negation of everything that is righteous, and is the seat of all things that are wrong. If the torment is mental and not physical, you still have a worse situation to encounter.

And you hear many others say that people get their hell here. The saved do. Over in Hebrews twelve and six and seven we are reminded of the chastening of the Lord. Psalms eighty nine and thirty two and three give us positive assurance of that. Many of the children of God suffer terrible agonies here because of their sins. The Holy Spirit sets aside and fails to use many well qualified and good intentioned Christians because their lives do not put them in the way of His blessing and guidance. If you are able to go along in evil practices without a definite compunction of conscience you'd better examine the landmarks, for evidently there is not a genuine experience with Him. Of course the more we practice any type of sin the less horrible it may seem to be to us, but we never get so deep in that we are not regularly warned of its peril to our usefulness. And no greater hell

could ever come to us than the knowledge that by our own disobediences we were making impossible the use of our talents and equipment in the service we have felt compelled to do.

There are two outstanding characters in the Bible who give us an insight into this inner suffering. David said that his sin so overwhelmed his conscience and crushed his spirit that it was as though the very bones in his body were being broken. Psalms thirty two, and three and four, gives us that picture. And his relief at being forgiven is also one of great rejoicing. Paul tells us in the seventh of Romans how there is continual warfare between the flesh and the spirit, and how hard it is for men who are Christians to live correctly. He then expresses the yearning of his heart that after he has preached the gospel, he himself should not be set aside because of the sins of the flesh. The Book says He chastens, or scourges, *every* son whom He receiveth. We do suffer a lot of hell here, and it is hell of the worst possible kind.

So whether you can believe all the details about the doctrine of hell or not, you must believe that there is such a place; and that those who have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God are to be the inhabitants of such place. In the Old Testament the word used was practically always in the sense of the grave, for the doctrine of hell had not been developed at that time. The word, like baptism, is a New Testament word, and that

is perfectly natural; due to the fact that the advent of Jesus, with His work of atonement, had not yet come, and there was not the basis of separation yet in operation. The word used in the New Testament is that usually meaning the place for the punishment of evil. The word "Gehenna" has reference to a burning of trash and rubbish, and it was outside the city of Jerusalem. From that picture we get our interpretation of the place of burning fire, a place separated from the New Jerusalem, a figurative word for Heaven.

Hell is the opposite of Heaven. Whatever is in Heaven is not in Hell. Those who go to hell will be forever separated from God, and their resurrected physical bodies will make their punishment real and not imaginary. The Bible teaches that the place and punishment will be eternal, and that Satan is the leading master and ruling spirit of all the things of Hell. Hell is filled with terrible anguish and torment and those who inhabit the region are vile and wicked. There will be nothing there to make anybody want to do better, for all the influences leading to that happy state will have been removed. No babies, or little children, with all their sweetening influence will be there, and those who inhabit the place will be hardened sinners, and will continue to become more unrighteous and wicked. Every unbeliever in all the world will be there, for there is no chance for future acceptance after he departs the scenes of this life.

Heaven is the opposite of Hell. Writers who have attempted to describe its beauty have exhausted words in the attempt. Heaven is described as a kingdom with a king, a crown prince, and millions of loyal subjects; it is described as a place of rest, where we may get away from the sins of this disturbed world and rest our tired souls and bodies; it is described as an inheritance which gives us a right to all the bounties and privileges of so wonderful a place; it is described as a home, where in our father's house we may enjoy the blessedness which comes to a child in the royal family; and it is described as a city with its streets of gold and gates of pearl and living fountains of water, where its inhabitants may discover delights which are prepared for those who have chosen the good way.

Heaven is a large place. There is a suggested measurement in the Bible which may mean fifteen hundred miles square. It will be large enough for everybody who prepares to live there. Hell is likened to a pit which means small of circumference and deep in darkness, but Heaven is the opposite—unlimited in space and brighter than the noonday sun. It will be easy of access for there are gates on every side, and these will swing open wide for all those who come with evidence of a reservation. There will be no signs posted announcing that all space is taken for there has been prepared a place of habitation for everybody who is on the Lamb's book of life.

The inhabitants of Heaven are the redeemed. Over in Revelation seven and fourteen we read, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb". This means that these martyrs of the cross will serve and live with their Christ forever. In the same chapter there is described the great multitude which no man can number from all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, who are to shout the praises of Heaven forever. Jesus was careful to give to John the vision that the Jews and Gentiles were both to share in that glory, for in Revelation seven he shows that certain from the tribes are to be sealed also. And in the picture of the throne in chapter four there are the seats filled by four and twenty elders, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, and the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Some contend that Heaven will be here on this earth. I don't find but little, if any, backing for that in the scripture, but if He wants it so, it will be done, and it suits me fine. Wherever God, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and Abraham, and Moses, and David, and John the Baptist, and Paul and the others are will be Heaven anyhow. He will take care of all that, for He said He was going to get a place ready for us; and if He chooses to bring that prepared Heaven and set it down here upon this earth, it will be His will, and therefore perfect.

Others ask if we will know each other there. We certainly will not know any less there than we do here. The greatest impediment to perfect knowledge which we have is this sinful flesh. When sin is removed, with all its blighting influences, we will be able to know much more. It reads, "Now we know in part, then shall we know even as we shall be fully known". When Jesus came back from the grave He was recognized by those who had known Him before, and it is reasonable to believe that the same thing would be true of us. The writer of the song said, "And with the morn those angel faces smile, which we have loved long since, and lost awhile".

Even though we may not have as full knowledge about Heaven and Hell as we should like to have, I am sure we may safely believe that the Bible definitely teaches certain truths about both of them. Both of them are given in the Bible as definite places from which emanates the good or bad influences inimical to the character of the place. Their inhabitants consist of those who have chosen, or rejected, the provision made in the death of Jesus for the salvation of the souls of men. The line of separation is made by belief, or unbelief, in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. The separation is complete, for there is a great gulf fixed, and there is no passing from one sphere to another. God does not arbitrarily send men to either place,

but their rejection or acceptance of his plan of redemption makes them the arbiters of their own destiny.

We may believe that hell is the abiding place of the devil and his angels; that all the unsaved are doomed for a habitation there; that the torment there, whether it be physical or mental torture, is more terrible than we may be able to conceive; that no influences there will give any chance for any improvement, but characters there will become more and more unrighteous and filthy; and that those who inhabit that sphere will be separated from God and the righteous throughout eternity.

We may believe that heaven is the very opposite of hell; that it is described as a place of perfect beauty and holiness; that all the members of the Godhead, the angels, and all the redeemed will be there forever; that there is ample room for everybody who makes preparation to go; that there will be full recognition of the saints and loved ones there; that no sorrow, or grief, or disappointment, will ever enter its portals; and that forever and forever we will worship and praise Him who made possible our inheritance to eternal life.

Our practice should be that we should stay just as far from the enticements and allurements of the influences of hell as it may be possible for us to do, and make just as ample preparation as we can to enjoy to the fullest all the glories of that land whose chief attraction must be the redeemer of our souls.

CHAPTER XI

Missions

Matthew	*10:5-14*
Matthew	*28:19-20*
Mark	*16:15-16*
Luke	*10:1-2*
John	*17:18*
Acts	*1:8*
Acts	*10:42-48*
Acts	*13:2-4*
Acts	*15:36-41*
Romans	*1:15-16*
Heberws	*12:1-2*
Revelation	*22:17*

The work of missions is inherent in the message of the gospel and the experience of those who have believed to the saving of the soul. It finds its expression in the fact that the experience which we have in our own lives is too good to keep to ourselves. It gathers its impetus and force in the reality of the shortness of life and our consciousness that what we do about it as individuals we must do quickly, for the brevity of life is its most universal characteristic. It determines its program by the vast millions of men who have no access to the

gospel except as those who know about Him take the message of Him to those who have not heard. It counts its success in the words of the Son of God who promised to be with those who would go with the message even down to the end of the age.

The New Testament is definite in the fact that the church which Jesus instituted was a missionary one. In Matthew ten and five we find Jesus Himself sending out twelve men and giving them definite instructions as to whom they should go and what should be their message. In Luke ten and one we find the Lord again sending out seventy others with definite instructions as to their work. That means that more than sixty five percent of the members of the early church were definitely sent out to do the work of a missionary. In Matthew twenty eight and nineteen and twenty there is the record of Jesus meeting with His disciples before His departure, and giving them what we term the great commission to go out and make disciples of all the nations, promising to be with them to the end of the world.

In Acts one and eight the disciples are promised the power for witnessing, and on the day of Pentecost the power was given and the program of worldwide missions really began. In Acts ten we are given the story of the work of Peter with Cornelius and the launching of the program with the Gentiles. In Acts thirteen we have the record of the separation of Paul and Barnabas to the work

of missions beyond the immediate vicinity of Antioch. The remainder of the book of Acts is the history of the work of Paul and his associates in the spread of the gospel and the organization of churches over Asia Minor, and as far as Rome. In the last book of the Bible and the last chapter we hear the invitation from heaven for all those who will, to come and take the water of life freely. The New Testament is our missionary book, because it abounds in the story and message of missions.

The purpose of missions is to save the lost. That must be the whole center of our message. In a very real sense all preaching must be missionary, for that is the real purpose of all preaching. Unless men are lost without Christ we have no reason for a missionary program, or movement. But the very fact that they are lost without Him makes such a movement imperative. I am aware of the fact that in our missionary programs there are many subsidiary agencies such as schools and hospitals, and these are a necessary part of it; but they only exist as an aid to bringing people into a place of opportunity to hear the gospel. Our whole program is for the purpose of bringing men into a saving knowledge of the truth, and our emphasis must always be on that.

The beginning of the modern missionary movement is too well known to be recounted here. Baptists have read time and again the thrilling story of William Carey and his beginnings in missions.

They know that he labored for seven long and toilsome years before he baptized his first convert. Baptists are also familiar with the story of Luther Rice and Adonirum Judson, and their change to the Baptist position after a careful study of the New Testament, on their way to the mission fields. These most important happenings are the very heart of Baptist missionary beginnings in the modern world, and all of us are grateful to our heavenly father for such a clear manifestation of His leading and guidance in this most important work.

The recent global conflict has had a significant bearing on missions. Those of us who have been out there have some very definite convictions about the difference in those who have a genuine experience of grace, and those who have not. We are most certain now that any kind of ceremonies, and forms, and creeds, apart from a genuine experience of the new birth is only sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. The men in the war who stood up with a good spiritual testimony and a standard of life that was acceptable, were those who are saved and not those who are trying to get saved, through their ceremonies and rituals. Any country that does not allow an opportunity for its people to get an unhindered and undiluted message of the gospel is a ripe field for missions. Such a small portion of the world is now getting a chance at the genuine article! The Baptist opportunity for missionary endeavor has never been so bright and impelling as now!

The most important mission field, for Baptists, in all the world is the United States of America. How little of the truth is preached in our own good land! There is so much formality and so little real preaching and teaching! The counterfeit schemes and rackets which operate under the name of a church, and make a pretense at teaching the Bible are multiplying with every rising sun. This country is flooded with money, and every kind of religious fanaticism that can be originated is being fostered for the purpose of filling the coffers of those who stand to profit financially by such a racket, or movement. On the streets, on the air, under the tents, and even in the church houses you find men and women who spurn the truth, but who originate a concoction that will be the means of lifting a few dollars from the pockets of the uninstructed.

Our home and state mission boards have an opportunity now like they have never had before to send sound men into every part of our country to preach and teach the New Testament to millions who know absolutely nothing about it. We need to do this because of the tremendous importance which this country now has in world leadership. If the light of New Testament truth is snuffed out here now, the world will suffer irreparable loss. And please do not be sure that we do not stand in imminent danger of that in this good year of grace in which we now live. Organizations which foster forms and ceremonies, to the exclusion of New Testament truth for the salvation of men, are

gradually tightening their grip on our great free country; and once the practice of forms and rituals become the accepted practice of the religionists of our country, the light of New Testament teaching and preaching will be out.

Those of us who have gone into many lands in these last four years have watched three religious systems at work. One has been the system of the head of the country, or emperor, as the worshipped deity. His word has been the law in religion, and whatever the people have known about religion they have gotten through him. This brand of worship has produced a kind of fanaticism which has made the followers daring and adventurous beyond conception. They have been able to see and hear what to them was their God; and his commands and wishes have been the law of their life. All personal restraint and protection has been cast aside, and they have practiced a blind obedience to what they thought were the wishes of their God.

Another group have been those who have worshipped the memory of those who have gone before them. That kind of worship is known as ancestor worship. Those who follow this type of devotion are much better citizens that those of the former group, because the influences which their religion brings are mellower and of more gentle demeanor than those which follow the worship of their emperor, or leader. The memories of their beloved dead are most always of a gentle nature, and these

followers become people of more patience and endurance than is true of those who worship a living hero.

A third group are those whose knowledge of religion is reposed in a priest who represents all the people know about God. He tells them of one greater than he, who sits on a throne in the eternal city, and who receives from God what he passes on to him, and he in turn gives out to them. As long as they stay on good terms with the priest and the church he represents, they need have no worries about the things in the future. The church, through the priest, must have charge of every phase of their lives, and no regulation which he makes can be broken, under the penalty of severe punishment. Those who have watched this system at work in countries where it has complete sway, can testify to the poverty, filth, and depravity which exist there.

And only the gospel of the New Testament can remedy these conditions. There must be freedom and light gotten to the people themselves, before there can ever be any real improvement made. Most of these countries have tried one form of government after another, but they have all failed, because none of them have brought enlightment to the people. The leaders have been able to mislead the people, and cause them to support men of ulterior motives because the people themselves have not understood the better way. German

leaders have been able to make the people follow them blindly because the practically unanimous religious instruction in Germany for over a thousand years has been void of free, and democratic, New Testament teachings. Luther was as dogmatic and dictatorial as Rome, and his followers have been ripe recruits for schemes of conquest, regardless of the price paid in treachery and blood. Italy and Spain have been as bad, and France only occasionally has shown signs of improvement. Cover up the Bible, and you put out the light.

China is a field of marvelous promise. Their importance is accentuated because of their teeming millions, and also because of their present and future position in Asia. We will either make China strong and democratic, and Christian, or they will ultimately wreck us. They are to be the strong nation in Asia, and good friends of the United States; or they will be a weak nation in Asia, and used against the United States. This country has no option in the matter of China. We must make them a strong military power, and keep them friendly to us; or withdraw our commitments in the Pacific. It may be that a chain of opposition is forming with Spain and Argentina and the Philippine Islands, and any others that the Nazi clique may enlist, but such a scheme can never make headway so long as China can be friendly and strong. And if, as many believe, Russia is to be our future enemy, China will be of tremendous importance.

But democracies do not remain such unless there is the enlightenment of the people. And the New Testament must be their most important book. And that is where Baptists come in. If Baptists could so enlarge their work of missions in China that the New Testament ideal of freedom could be incorporated into Chinese life and teachings, the whole of Asia could very soon be won to Christ. There is our greatest single opportunity and challenge, beyond our own shores. And there will be very scanty opposition to mission work there. The Americans and Chinese have come out of the war on very friendly terms, and our experience with them over the past three generations has reenforced that feeling of friendship. The rulers of China are also Christian in principle, and there will be no organized opposition to missionary endeavor there.

Russia is a land of Baptist opportunity. For centuries that great country was pauperized and enslaved by a heirarchical system of religion. When the revolution came and they threw off the chains of superstition, they probably went too far to the left, but the past few years has found a sobering toward a sane Christianity. It is not probable that Russia will ever go back to the old abuses practiced under the Czars; and because of that a genuine type of New Testament Christianity will have a good opportunity there. There are already a great group of Baptists there, and any help and

encouragement given to them now will be of lasting benefit in the program of Baptists in the future of Russia.

Roman Catholics have tightened their belt in the Latin American countries during the war. They beat the Federal Council of Churches at their own game, and succeeded in getting across the idea that the religion having the majority of followers in a given territory should have the right to control the religious practices of the people there. Because of that the missionary work in those countries has had a temporary scotching; but Baptists will go along in those countries with the same loyalty to New Testament truth that has characterized their work through all the years of their missions in those lands.

One of the bright pages in recent Baptist missionary history is the work in the Hawaiian Islands. On two or three trips to Honolulu I had ample opportunity to see the progress of the work there, and immediately wondered why it had not been done long ago. The program there is so well manned, and the prospects are extremely bright. That may easily become the gateway and training ground for all our missions in the Pacific. Honolulu is just another American town, and if the Islands become another American state, we will have a still greater opportunity to preach the gospel to those whom we may then consider to be in our own homeland.

Other countries where our missionary endeavors have been in operation have not changed appreciably during the war, and there will probably be no change in the pace or program. Japan is a notable exception to that statement, but it is too early now to give any kind of estimate as to the prospects for missions there. If the country can be kept small and unarmed there is good opportunity; if it is allowed to become powerful again, the matter of missionary work will share the same fate that it did in the years preceding world war number two. If China becomes our powerful ally, as it now appears that it may, the Japanese proposition will offer much encouragement, and the gospel may be preached there with good results.

The new movement on the part of the Sunday School Board to show educational films to our people in the Sunday School, and through other organizations, may be used to a good advantage to enlighten Baptists in the matter of missions. The actual buildings in which we work, and the actual people who do the work may be seen, and that will create more interest in what we are doing. The work will not seem to be so far away, if we can get an actual picture of the doings, as it is being done.

Another definite influence which the war has had on all mission work is that the matter of going as a missionary is not to carry the dread which once characterized it. As a lad I can remember

that one who went as a missionary was about counted as lost, so far as any chance to ever see them again was concerned. But during the war our men have gone everywhere, and in most countries many are to remain there, either as forces representing the army, or navy, or because of some business venture. Improvement in living conditions, which these troops have perfected, will also make health better; and the lives of our missionaries will not be endangered by disease and famine and other hindrances which once existed. There will be more communication also because the world has grown to be so much smaller under the advance of so many modern inventions. Our young people who hear the call to go out there to work in the churches will not have as great feeling of lonesomeness as formerly characterized a call to be a missionary.

There will also be a more enlightened hearing on the mission fields. The same war that brought the world closer together, also gave the people of these countries some knowledge of who were the great powers in the world. And in that information the United States stands at the top. Those who go from this country in the years ahead will carry a prestige which they have not previously had; and the peoples on all mission fields will be more eager to know and hear one who comes from what they believe to be a country of great power and wealth, and fairness in dealing with others. And also these people have learned many things from Americans, and even though some of the things they have

learned have been harmful and not helpful, it still is true that they are more susceptible to information and knowledge than ever before.

Of special importance to Baptists also is the fact that there is a definite movement in most all the war-torn countries to perfect some kind of a democratic organization in government. Even in Europe that movement gains momentum, and if it should go far enough, we might one fine day wake up to find that religions liberty was finally going to be granted. That would really be a Baptist hour, and all New Testament Christians would rejoice at such an acievement. Under such a form of government Baptists would be allowed to carry the light of New Testament truth to all countries, and then the work of missions would truly be on the march. Let us fervently hope for such a day!

As a summary I think we may say that the work of missions is inherent in the message of the gospel; that the New Testament clearly sets forth the command and method of it; that the purpose of missionary program is primarily to save the lost; that the recent global conflict has had a significant bearing on the program of missions; that Baptists must be careful to preach the truth and press the battle in our own homeland; that only New Testament teaching can ever solve the problem of superstition and ignorance and fanatical worship in other lands; that China, Russia, and the Hawaiian Islands have become great strategical centers

for our program of missions; and that movements for enlightenment, and the residence of many Americans in many lands, have given to the work of the missionary a new and heartening place of importance.

Our practice toward missions should be a loyal and regular support of all our organized work, so that men and the money would get out to the fields as rapidly as it is needed. In no other way can our missionary program do what it should do in this day of greatest need, and most challenging opportunity.

CHAPTER XII

Evangelism

Luke	*15:1-10*
Luke	*24:27*
John	*1:42*
John	*3:1-8*
Acts	*28:30-31*
Romans	*10:14*
I Corinthians	*3:9*
Ephesians	*4:5*
II Timothy	*4:11*

So much abuse has been done to the work of evangelism that most of our people have turned from it as an evil which they do well to escape. They look upon an evangelist as one who comes to a town to put on a big show and get as much money as he can. And unfortunately many so-called evangelists do that very thing. They style their work a "campaign", and it really becomes that. They put on a campaign for attendance; then a campaign for operating expenses; then a campaign for joiners; and finally a campaign for a "worthy" love offering. More recently men who

pose as authority on the scriptures, and who have in some way secured a doctor's degree, get them a tent and go to a city and stay for weeks under the guise of the defenders of the truth. They only ask for enough per week to bear their expenses, and usually have along some books and pamphlets which they sell to further help expenses. The stay of all these brethren is determined in length by the amount of offering which comes in; for if the Lord doesn't send enough of the faithful to the services with the necessary money to keep going, that is evidence that He desires them to move to better fields of finance.

Evangelism is a definite prerogative of the churches. Evangelists should be sent out by the churches, or the groups which represent the cooperative effort of the churches. In Ephesians four Paul is discussing the need for keeping the unity of the spirit and exhorting that there be cooperation and fellowship in all the work of the church. In the eleventh verse he definitely mentions the work of the evangelist as separate, or at least as being cooperative with but distinct from, that of pastor and teacher. In second Timothy four and five the young preacher is instructed to do the work of an evangelist, signifying that an evangelist does have some special tasks to do which are not the definite duty of the pastor, as such. Many interpret this passage as meaning that Paul was telling Timothy that the pastor was also the evangelist, and profess to see here that evangelists are

not needed; but it rather looks like he was telling him to do it, because there was not an evangelist available.

When I was a boy we called the evangelist the associational missionary. He did the work of an evangelist, but we just didn't call him that. We also had several state evangelists who visited the churches and held meetings, and did other work which they could do. The offering was always sent to the State Mission Board and he received his money from them. We also had Home Board evangelists, and they represented a still larger field. We still have these workers under some sort of name and arrangement, but their work becomes more of an organizational function, rather than an evangelistic, or soul saving and spiritual ministry. They are mostly charged with seeing that the organizational life of the unit employing them is properly cared for; and even though their work is extremely important and should never be minimized, they still are not evangelists in the truest sense. The evangelist, in the true sense, is the man who goes to the church at its invitation; preaches the number of days the pastor and people under the leading of the Holy Spirit feel that he should stay; earnestly pleads in public and private with men to give their hearts and lives to Christ and His cause; makes no mention of, or effort in, the matter of an offering; and goes on to the next church with a conscience clear of any part in schemes that will bring future embarrassment to the pastor.

Several forces have worked to eliminate the evangelist from the place he should have in the work of the churches. One of these is the man himself. In a great many cases the one who is serving as an evangelist does not feel a special urge to do that kind of work. He is in that field because he has had some reverses in the pastorate, and has not found other work more to his liking. He does not have any special fitness for the work of an evangelist; and his passion for souls is not his outstanding Christian virtue. He is really only using that work as a means for finding a more comfortable and remunerative work as pastor of one of the good churches he may have an opportunity to visit. And his ability to be absent from his family for any number of days has not been determined, in his eagerness to get out of the work he was in, and into the work which he believes will only be temporary.

Another weakness of many evangelists seems to be that of his own opinion of himself. He uses the best dozen sermons which he has been able to organize and build. After he uses them for a few meetings he is able to deliver them very fluently and effectively. The people to whom he delivers them become profuse in their compliments, and he believes what they say. Very soon he decides that if he had him a tent, and a staff of workers and singers, he could go out on his own initiative and become a very famous evangelist. He finds the money for the tent and goes out of the churches as

an evangelist; and most always terminates as a failure in the particular type of work he attempts to do, and becomes a severe critic of the very churches that gave him his opportunity at the beginning.

If his pride or ego does not take the turn toward public demonstration as described above, it may follow the avenue of a more cunning deception in the churches. It is very easy to find some fault in every church and pastor. Very few pastors have the unanimous approval of the churches they serve. That is most always true when they have been there for several years. And the man who is the evangelist for a meeting can always find the sore spots if he looks for them. The crowd who do not like the pastor will always confide in him, and he can either fan the flame or attempt to snuff it out. If he would like to have the church, and is not definitely in love with the work he is doing, he may whisper to the objectors that if they find themselves without a pastor, he would be glad to hear from them. And immediately these same objectors set about to find themselves out of a pastor as soon as possible.

This practice has been done so many times that the pastors have come to be very much opposed to the so-called evangelist with his tent and staff; and have decided to get along in some way without the aid of the special evangelist in the churches. The pastors control the meetings of the associations

and conventions, and when the matter of employing these evangelists is presented they are not retained or employed, if the pastors do not want them in their churches. It is only the natural outcome of a clash between the evangelist, who thinks he could do the work so much better than any one of the pastors in his given field; and the pastor, who thinks the evangelist should do the work he is employed to do, and not be attempting to run the business which he believes to be his particular field as the pastor of the church.

Another force which has squeezed out the evangelist is the fraternizing of pastors. We learned that in the college and seminary. I don't mean that any such course was taught there, but I mean that we were so poor when we went there that we had to do preaching and supply work in order to stay in school. We swapped meetings with our fellow student pastors, and it got to be a habit with us. So when we got out into the work we just naturally drifted into the habit of inviting one to hold a meeting who would most likely invite us in return. And the matter of our seasons of revival come to be an exchange of offerings, and a week of fine fellowship, rather than a passionate search for the lost and unenlisted.

The practice of asking pastors to assist in meetings is not bad, in a real sense. On the contrary the plan has been working very nicely. In the absence of these specially equipped evangelists, the pastors

have filled the place in a fine way. They have been able to sympathize with the problems of their fellow pastor, and have failed to listen to the complaints of those who are chronic objectors. Since most of our additions in membership come from the ranks of the children in the Sunday School there is probably, in most churches, not the need for a great spiritual stirring and awakening. Under normal circumstances the arrangement is probably the best that can be done.

There is one field of evangelism in which Baptists have practically a wide open, uncontested, opportunity. I refer particularly to adult evangelism. There are thousands of adult Christians in the normally formal groups in the United States, who have never seen an adult baptized, by any method. I had the joy of baptizing eight fine soldiers one Sunday evening on the ship as we were on our way to Okinawa. The ordinance was witnessed by at least five hundred men, ninety percent of whom had never before seen a New Testament baptizing. Practically all the larger groups of Christians in the United States receive most, if not all their members when they are infants. A few are received from other churches by letter and occasionally one is baptized as an adult, but the occasion is very rare.

This is the field where Baptists should major. Millions of adults in America do not know the Lord, and we are the people who have the message

for them. If we had four or five well equipped and definitely consecrated evangelists in each state who would make this work their work, the results could be marvelous. If each of them could go into twenty five churches each year, and with the help of the pastor search out these men and women, and by personal contact and preaching at the church, bring them into a saving knowledge of the truth, our churches would be greatly enriched. The chaplains found out the tremendous importance of the personal conference with the men in the army. They are back home now, and hundreds of thousands of them are not saved, and it is our task.

When I was a student at Mars Hill a minister by the name of J. C. Owen came there to the local church to hold the usual meeting two years in succession. But they proved not to be the usual meeting. I do not remember anything about his preaching, but I remember the power of his personal work. He allowed me to sit in the room with him one day when he interviewed, one by one, more than a dozen young men. Every day he met numbers of students, and many of them made the good decision. There was great spiritual power in the meetings, because men and women who were conscious of sin and evil, were repenting of and confessing their sins, and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. He spoke to them privately, and they confessed the Lord openly. I remember those meetings as two of the finest I have ever seen.

This adult evangelism is peculiarly the task of Baptists. Some other smaller groups are doing some of it. The various Pentecostal groups are recruiting most of their members by personal contact, but most of these are from the ranks of inactive members of the different churches, and they are not reaching great numbers of the unsaved. Most of their work is in the field of reconsecration and dedication. There are at least thirty million adults in the United States who have no church affiliation of any kind, and who have never made any profession of faith in Christ. Millions of the churched also are both unsaved and unenlisted. If the churches could find the evangelists, it would be a great partnership in the winning of these men and women. Let us never forgt that they can be saved even after they are grown up!

An emphasis upon adult evangelism does not minimize the need of a definite program of evangelism for younger ones. Nobody doubts the wisdom of a well organized and directed Sunday School program. Baptists are not doing too much of that—they are doing too little. The fine results of the amount they are doing lends inspiration to an enlarged effort in that field. Teachers who make definite preparation Sunday after Sunday, and teach boys and girls the truth of the Bible, are doing a very fine service for the Lord. Their reward comes in abundance when they witness these boys and girls, under the quickening power of the Holy

Spirit, yield themselves to the saving power of Christ, and follow Him in beautiful baptism. And they are further rewarded as they see them take their places in the work of the churches, and grow into useful and happy Christians. The work of the Sunday School is not to be discounted but greatly praised and loyally supported.

The Sunday School would be worth an enlarged effort if it did nothing but take the children off the streets. The records definitely show that of all the cases of juvenile delinquency brought before the courts, less than one tenth of one percent of them have been attending Sunday School. And none whatever go there who are regular in attendance. Sunday School attendance is an absolute antidote to crime, and if for no other reason than that, we should place forever increasing emphasis upon that program. And when there is the added fact that a large majority of our Christians have come up through the Sunday School we have additional reason for making it a stronger agency for evangelism.

The printed page becomes a great power in evangelism. The group known as Jehovah's Witnesses have sown down the country with their papers, pamphlets and books. Many good, but simple people, have become victims of their nefarious doctrines. Other false teachings are busy scattering their literature over the country. The Gideons are preparing to place one of their nice New Testa-

ments in the hands of every high school student in America. They did a marvelous job for the men in the services. People are reading now as never before and Baptists can not do better than to make their literature available to every person inclined to read it. Our Bible and book stores, and our Sunday School Boards are putting out great amounts of literature and Bibles, and as the paper situation gets better the distribution should be increased.

This matter of reading becomes a specialty in Baptist work. We are definitely apostles of light. We do not advocate the covering up of Bible truth but are always anxious that the people shall have it for themselves. We have always believed that if you should furnish a Bible to a Christian and let him read it without bias or prejudice, that he would inevitably be a Baptist. We have always stood for an open Bible, and the more the book is read the stronger Baptists will be, around the world. All the groups who believe in a free reading and interpretation of the Bible agree with Baptists on the great fundamentals—though many of them have allowed themselves to go astray on the minor matters. The teaching and practice of error has been the result of a withdrawal of the Bible from the people, and when the book has been freely used our work has made rapid progress. For that reason Baptists must put much emphasis upon literature in the fields of evangelism.

The radio is being much used in the field of evangelism. Many of the programs and messages are very poor, but unless we get on the air with something that is genuine the people will listen to that which is not good. More and more the radio becomes our agency for information, and our position in the field of New Testament christianity will compel us to take every advantage of modern methods of instruction. Nothing can ever take the place of the preached word at the church house but, for the benefit of those who do not attend, we must give the radio message in its purity and clearness. Results of such work are difficult to determine but if properly done, we have reason to believe much good may be accomplished through that channel.

Prayer is the soul of evangelism. Neither the work of salvation nor of enlistment can ever be done apart from a program that is undergirded and reinforced by fervent prayer. We can never do anything until we have prayed. The New Testament abounds with evidence of the place which prayer occupied in all the work of the early church. Prison doors were opened; men were released from the stocks; dead were restored to life; power was given to anoint the apostles for a worldwide mission; and the gospel was carried on land and sea, because Christians prayed. The prayer meeting may easily become the most important service of the church. The results of prayer cannot be measured visibly. It is of eternal estimate and value.

Then as Baptists we may believe that evangelism is definitely a prerogative of the churches as shown in the New Testament; that in our modern day those employed in that field have been used in a more restricted organizational sense; that much of the opposition to the so-called evangelists has been engendered by the practices of the evangelists themselves; that the pastors have done the work of evangelism in a very satisfactory way; that Baptists have a peculiar call and fitness for personal adult evangelism in this present day; that a group of consecrated evangelists would be of tremendous help in that field; that we should enlarge and intensify our program of evangelism in the Sunday Schools; that the radio and the printed page may be effectively used for purposes of evangelism; and that all of our programs and work in evangelism must be launched and promoted in the spirit of fervent and effectual prayer. For only in that spirit can we win the lost and train them for effective service in the churches.

CHAPTER XIII

Religious Liberty

Matthew	*2:13-14*
Matthew	*14:5-12*
Matthew	*17:24-27*
Luke	*2:1-4*
Luke	*20:22-25*
Acts	*25:10-11*
Romans	*13:1-7*
I Peter	*2:17*

Nowhere is religious liberty a reality. It is a beautiful phrase carrying with it a lofty sentiment, but men have never been able to enjoy its full meaning. It had been fondly hoped that at the close of the recent world conflict we might have it, but there is not a nearer approach to it now than before the war. Baptists have been its most strenuous advocates; have won victories in its behalf; and may be counted upon to continue the fight until it has been attained. The nearest approach to religious liberty to be found anywhere in the world, is in our own United States, for here none of the vicious restrictions imposed upon the teaching and propagation of faith is enforced, as

in many other countries. We have the basis for its complete practice here, and that good day may be coming on apace.

The first consideration in the matter of religious liberty is freedom of worship. Many people have the idea that that is the whole of religious liberty. It is certainly a most important phase of it. One of the four freedoms which we have heard so much about embraces this phase of religious liberty. This right is granted with varying restrictions in most all countries, though the restrictions in many of them are such that worship becomes difficult. In Iran, groups outside the state church, must have a regular church building before they can worship. They are not allowed to meet for worship in private homes. In Egypt, a royal decree is necessary for the erection of a new church, and groups are forbidden to worship in private homes. In Spain, the two hundred protestant churches in operation when Franco took over the government are now reduced to twenty, and these worship and work only under the most hostile circumstances.

The case of Germany in the matter of freedom of worship is very well known. The Gestapo superintended whatever worship was allowed, and preachers were even told what subject matter they would be allowed to use. Since Hitler is gone the situation will gradually right itself, but the seeds of Nazism is still there. In Russia, for many years, religious worship was either bound or very severely

hindered, but that situation is very much better now. In some of the Balkan States permits for worship must be granted for groups outside the state church, and these permits carried restrictions definitely contrary to freedom of assembly and worship. In Italy there was not sufficient competition in religion to cause any serious notice as to its observance. The Roman church has been, and is, the dominating force there, and Mussolini did not find it necessary to invoke methods of control which were necessary in Germany, where a more protestant influence refused to yield allegiance to the Hitler scheme.

In the United States, freedom of assembly and worship is granted in the constitution, and so far as I have been able to determine there are no places in our country where groups of people may not meet to worship in the way they desire. There may be some isolated cases where groups are not able to secure the exact location for the erection of their church building, because of some objection to the type of worship they perform, but such will only be found to be a local sentiment and not a general condition. Any type of organization is allowed to form in this country, choose any name it may select, and meet for worship or teaching as often as it chooses, so long as such service does not interfere with the peaceful process of the community. No restrictions are placed upon meetings for religious purposes regardless of the day of the week, or the time of the day.

Another consideration in the matter of religious liberty is that of the freedom of conscience. A man must be allowed to worship and practice whatever his own individual conscience leads him to believe is right and correct. The greatest thought ever to engage us is that of the competency of the individual soul under God. The fact than an individual may approach God for himself and make his requests known unto Him is the heart and soul of the gospel, and is in truth the real basis for freedom in worship and religion. To be denied the expression in word and in deed of our inmost desires and needs would be forever to deprive us of the right inherent in the very nature of our creation; for God made us individuals to be in His own image and endowed with the privilege of approach to Him. Man must be allowed to believe and worship as he chooses, or not to worship and believe at all, just as his conscience may direct him.

In real fact there can never be genuine religious liberty until all men and women are allowed to choose their kind of religion on a basis of their knowledge of its requirements. That ideal may never be attained, because obviously the majority of churched people, even in those countries possessing a genuine basis for its accomplishment, have had no choice in the matter of the kind of religion which they must practice. When they have come to years of moral and spiritual accountability they have been advised that the most important single thing in their life has already been settled by those

who were also attending to the matters of food and shelter and other routine affairs in their daily living. And the further impression is also made upon them that to question the correctness of that provision for them would be nonsensical, for religion is of such a nature that a correctness of one's views concerning its teachings is far less important than the convenience of its performance.

Paul gives us some instruction in this matter when he said that in his persecution of the church he was acting in all good conscience. He was in possession of a conscience that had been established for him by a segregated adherence to that religious instruction which had been cut and carved to fit a system, and he had made all investigation with the view to the further establishment of those principles in his thinking and actions. When he was shown the error of his way, he immediately came into possession of real freedom and liberty in religion, and set about to advocating the position that men must be allowed to live their lives on the basis of a personal revelation of truth as it may be found in the writings of those who were especially equipped by the Holy Spirit to give us the truth of His word.

By no means does it follow, however, that if a church member should investigate his religious or church affiliation he would always alter his convictions about it. He probably would not. The fact is that in very many cases, if not in most of them, the enquirer might be able to approve of

the early decisions made for him. He might even become a more ardent supporter of his creed; for certainly an allegiance based on conviction would surely be very much stronger than one which had been imposed without prior investigation. But the point to be made here is that no person ever has genuine religious liberty until he has it as a matter of conscience, and not as a matter of convenience. The fact that he is allowed to worship on Sunday, or Monday, as he chooses does not constitute religious liberty for him; on the contrary it might be a contributor to an increasing bondage. Only that liberty which is given through a decision made by an enlightened conscience can ever be genuine religious liberty.

A third consideration in the matter of religious liberty is that of the right to teach and propagate the doctrines and creeds of any given group. And here is the field where we lack so much in its attainment. For in more than half the countries of the world there is some kind of restriction concerning this practice. In all Moslem countries the religion of Islam is the religion of the state. In these countries other religions have some freedom in the matter of worship but are definitely forbidden to give out any literature or make any kind of appeal that could be interpreted as an attempt to persuade Moslems to change their religious beliefs. No broadcasting of Christian programs is allowed over the radio, and the matter of education for Christian purposes is strictly forbidden. Turkey is an excep-

tion to this rule, for there is some freedom there, especially in the matter of the distribution of Bibles and religious literature. And also in Turkey there is a gradual breaking of the rigid rules and the leaning toward a more liberal tendency in matters religious on the part of the government.

In the countries so badly torn by war it is not now possible to get an accurate basis for any prediction of what may be expected in the future with reference to religious liberty in these countries. Germany may be expected to allow at least a semblance of freedom to teach and distribute, though, as in so many other countries a regulation on paper granting such right, does not always give the privilege in reality. When an overwhelming majority of the people in any country belong to one, or even two, more or less established religions, it is almost impossible for smaller groups to secure the privileges and rights in religion which they desire and deserve. Italy will be controlled by the Roman church, and even though the constitutional pronouncements will be for religious freedom, the record in the past will not create any abundant hope that freedom of teaching and general Bible distribution will be allowed. Since Italy got out of the war much earlier than other enemies, and since they outwardly repudiated fascism, it is presumed that the church will have a much greater influence there than before the war. And in such an instance propagation of other teachings and creeds will have little hope of success.

Japan will not be able to control the lives of the people as completely as before the war. The emperor is not now the supreme being in all things spiritual as he has been. As long as Japan is in the hands of her conquerors there will be an outward appearance of democratic leaning; and religious liberty as it applies to the teaching and propagation of other creeds than that originally their own will be free to operate there. What will happen over a longer period remains a matter of conjecture. France and Poland and the Balkan countries, while showing some evidence of more democratic tendencies toward groups not Catholic will probably revert to the well known policy of support and protection of either the Roman or Greek Catholic Churches, and these will control the matter of dissemination of doctrine and religious teaching. The attitude of hatred toward Jews in all European countries may be an indication of what may be expected toward other groups, small in number. Also the recent world-wide gesture and implications of the Roman Catholic Church may remind us that in all countries where the church has a majority of communicants it will be certain to control the religious teaching which that country may receive.

There is no evidence that the war has had any influence to change for the better any of the countries not actively engaged in it. In all of the Latin American countries there is the constitutional granting of religious liberty, but in actual practice,

it does not go beyond the granting of freedom to worship. Teaching is largely controlled by the dominant church, and the state is obligated to protect and defend the church in its program. In some of the countries daily mass is had in all public schools. Spain and Portugal continue to control all teaching, and groups other than Roman Catholic do not make much progress in the matter of the propagation of their faith. Scandinavian countries, which are predominantly of the Lutheran faith, grant other groups freedom of worship, and in most cases the right to teach their doctrine without interference. The conditions for religious liberty in these countries may be said to be no better or worse than before the war.

In the United States there is no outward endeavor to curb religious teaching by any group either in schools, or in the free distribution of literature. Discussion of religious subjects through the newspapers is also engaged in. Radio addresses by any group is allowed, and the freedom of speech and press here is a right that is not denied to any religious denomination, order, or society. There are not placed upon the means and types of work which religious organizations may foster as many limitations, if indeed any at all, as will be found in many other countries. I think it could be squarely said that in the matter of the teaching and propagation of religious faith in the United States, that that phase of religious liberty is fully granted and recognized.

And this phase of religious liberty is very close akin to the question of individual conscience. When John Clarke and the Massachusetts authorities had their famous controversy in sixteen hundred and fifty one it was declared by the authorities that the court had not sentenced Clarke because of his conscience but because of his practice. Whereupon Clarke replied, "Be it so, but I say that matter of fact and practice was but the manifestation of my judgment and conscience; and I make account that man is void of judgment and conscience, with respect unto God, that hath not a fact and practice suitable thereunto". Unless men and institutions are allowed to teach and preach what their convictions lead them to believe are correct and right, then the benefits of such beliefs can profit only themselves. And they certainly do not have the right of religious liberty unless they are allowed so to do. A cardinal principle of conviction is the right to express that conviction for the benefit of others. Liberty and freedom demand that right, and unless it is granted there is not religious liberty.

Another important phase of religious liberty is that of the separation of church and state. The New Testament teaches that. In Luke twenty and twenty five Jesus exhorts His disciples to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are His. He clearly teaches that the obligations are separate ones, and should never be allowed to interfere, one with the other. In Romans thirteen Paul exhorts the members of

the church to give the proper consideration for the powers of government; which he holds to include the payment of taxes, obedience to law, and proper respect and honor to the rulers of the land. In the first letter he writes to Timothy, in which he gives him proper instruction for guiding and leading the church of which Timothy is pastor, he exhorts that prayer be made for all those in authority. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any indication that the church and the state are to be vitally and actively connected.

The student of history is familiar with the long struggle which has existed in most countries over the control of the lives of the people. The Catholic Churches, Roman, Greek, and Anglican, have insisted that the church should be recognized as a power stronger than the state. Where the Roman Catholic Church has the great majority of people in its membership it insists that the state shall grant it a kind of protection which other churches do not have. It also enters fully into the politics of the country and instructs its members in the matter of voting. The Greek church does not have quite as much political power, due to the fact that there is not as much power vested in the patriarch as in the pope. Salaries of Catholic teachers are paid by the state, and the general program of the church receives state support in whatever amount the church needs and requests it. In England the salaries of the ministers of the Anglican church

are paid by the government, and taxes are collected from the people for church support. In that country also the king must be a member of the Church of England, and twenty four bishops and two archbishops are members of the house of Lords. The prime minister, representing the king, appoints the bishops, and the state has very great power over the church. England probably presents the most complete union of church and state anywhere to be found in the world. The Scandinavian countries follow about the pattern exhibited by Great Britain.

There have been significant statements made by leaders in these state supported and state controlled churches in recent years, or even months. These statements are to the effect that in the United States, where there is the separation of church and state, both the Roman and Anglican churches declare their work to be the best of anywhere in the world. Fifty one cents of every dollar being received by the Vatican comes from Catholics in the United States and some Roman Catholic writers believe that the excellent condition of the church here is due to the fact that the church has more freedom here. However, those who know the history of these bodies with reference to their position and practice in the matter of state and church affiliation, expect neither a sudden nor a gradual separation in the countries where the church has predominance in membership.

The following statements from authoritative sources make the suport of the principle of the separation of church and state impossible for the Roman Catholic Church. In the "Syllabus of Errors" published in eighteen hundred and sixty four Pope Pius the ninth refuted what he said were eighty serious errors including freedom of the press, protestantism, communism, Bible societies, civil marriages, free scientific investigation, separation of church and state, public schools, and religious toleration. Another Catholic quotation is, "As far as God's law is concerned, no one has a real right to accept any religion save the Catholic religion, or to be a member of any church save the Catholic church, or to practice any form of divine worship save that commanded or sanctioned by the Catholic Church". The Catholic position in the United States is that since religious liberty is the constitutional right of the people, they will not only claim it for themselves, but accede to it for others; but in countries where the majority of the people are Catholic their position is entirely different. They make their position and practice in the matter flexible enough to cover the peculiar desires of the country, unless they have enough strength to set the pace for themselves.

Baptists have ever been ardent supporters of the separation of church and state. That is one of our most cherished principles, and Baptists have never allowed a union of their denomination with the state. Roger Williams made that the Cardinal

principle in his Rhode Island colony, and was driven out of Massachusetts because he condemned the union of the church and state. For more than a hundred years Baptists in the United States fought for religious liberty and it was largely through their efforts that the first amendment to the constitution, guaranteeing religious liberty, was enacted. Rhode Island refused to ratify the constitution until promise was given concerning this matter. Baptists definitely believe in a free church and a free state.

The question is often asked if Baptists would persecute others if they had the opportunity. In consideration of the fact that they never have done so it would be safe to answer the question in the negative. It is definitely certain that if they should do so, it would be necessary, as a prerequisite to such practice, for them to surrender all their fundamental and basic principles. They would be compelled to renounce their belief in the right of individual salvation and responsibility to God; in their belief in the authority of the scripture as the rule of faith and practice; in the principle of religious liberty; and in the symbolic meaning of the ordinances. And when they did that they would no longer be Baptists, and would therefore not persecute as Baptists. Their principles would not allow it.

In eight states in the union Baptists have enough followers that if they should so decide, they could

elect all the officers in those states, but the records show that no such procedure is ever attempted. There are sixteen senators and eighty one congressmen from these states and less than thirty five percent of them are Baptists. There is no religious prejudice practiced in the matter of voting. A Catholic chaplain said to me that he thought Southern Baptists failed to vote for Governor Smith because he was a Catholic. I reminded him that of the eight states that the Governor carried six of them were overwhelmingly Baptist, and a seventh one was established on the Baptist principle of separation of church and state. And I also reminded him that in the middle west where the majorities were so tremendous against the governor there are few Baptists. A third reminder to my fine friend was that the governor ran on a dripping wet platform, when the country was legally dry. Harding was a Baptist, but never carried a Baptist state. So Baptists don't vote on strictly religious grounds. Their principle of religious liberty and freedom of conscience forbids it.

The state owes the church protection in its worship. Officers of the law, and the courts, have the obligation to see that no worship service is disturbed. The state is also charged with the responsibility of seeing that the property of church organizations is not destroyed or molested. Churches, as corporations, are also to receive just and fair treatment in the courts of equity. Ministers, or other employees of the church shall have equal

rights in law with all other citizens. The chief relation which the State has to the church is that of protection and equal justice.

The church has an obligation to the state. It must strive to train the very best citizens for the state that it can. Moral and spiritual instruction must make of men and women also good citizens. Members of the church must pay their taxes, and must be carful to vote for the best interests of the state. They must elect the best available public servants. The church, in its services, must pray for the state and its officers. We must strive to make the state a better servant of the people, by giving to it clean and capable voters and citizens.

But they must be kept separate. Each must exercise its function in its own sphere. The nature of their work is such that they cannot be done in unity. Baptists must ever contend for the separation of church and state as a cardinal principle in religious liberty.

And the principle of religious liberty introduces the matter of the teaching of the Bible in the public schools. The public schools of the country are definitely the property and prerogative of the state. The Bible is distinctly the book of the churches. What relation should they have? Baptists are divided on the subject but as for me I believe they should be as separate as the church and state. I am aware of the fact that the Bible

should have a universal reading, and that the more Bible readers you have the more Baptists there be. And it may be that the values will outweigh the losses, but I don't think so.

Several objections present themselves. The first is that there are many children in the schools whose parents do not want it taught. There are Jewish taxpayers who wouldn't want their children taught anything out of the New Testament. And if you only teach the stories out of the Old Testament, or even the Psalms and Proverbs, you are not teaching the part of the Bible which represents ninety percent of the pupils. There are Catholic children in the schools, and their church objects to them having any instruction other than that of their own creed. From a standpoint of fairness it is not a good policy.

And then who is to teach it? You can't even correctly read the Bible, without some kind of interpretation on it. And no teacher could possibly have an interpretation which would be acceptable to all patrons of the school. The most serious objection arises here because the teacher would be forced to teach the Bible either for the beauty of its literature, the sweetness of its love stories, the humanity of its characters, the simplicity of its illustration, or the fairness of its ethics. When the student finished high school he would look upon the Bible as a beautiful book, which one would do well to admire, but which had no authority for

his life. Inspiration would be a myth, and the miracles of Jesus would be a matter of serious conjecture. He could certainly have no real conception of the value of the Bible.

There is in many sections a plan used in which children are excused certain periods to meet teachers from their own denomination for Bible instruction. That may be an improvement, but is certainly not a necessity. Most churches have an adequate teaching program for children from families of their own membership, and if it needs expanding let the churches do it, and not the public school. And let it be done in the churches. The local pastors of the community should be invited to the school at regular intervals to conduct the devotional at the chapel hour; the superintendent or principal should read a Bible passage and have prayer in chapel when he deems it expedient; individual teachers may conduct a religious program in their own class room, if they feel it necessary; but no special curriculum rating, with regular period assigned for teaching, should be given the Bible in public schools.

Baptists will do well to advocate and support this type of freedom. Public schools exist for the purpose of giving a general education to all American youth, but the Bible could not be classed as a text in the field of general education. When you destroy the authority of the book you cease to have Baptists, for they can't exist without a Bible

which has authority to them beyond any ordinary book. And to teach it generally in the public schools will very soon give it a place of no more importance than grammar or arithmetic. Better to keep it in the churches and church schools.

Religious liberty may then be said to include the right of all people everywhere to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, when and where they will; to be based fundamentally and really upon the freedom of the individual conscience; to include the right of churches to teach and propagate their creeds and doctrines through all legitimate agencies; to mean a definite and working separation of church and state; to recognize on the part of the state the obligation of protection in law to all church bodies and their representatives; to expect from the churches loyal support in training good citizens for the state and instructing them in the Bible teachings with reference to good citizenship; to emphasize and believe that persecution and discrimination in matters religious are directly opposed to its principle; and to exhort a watchful care that neither the church nor the state shall assume more control over the activities of the other than the fundamental right of freedom will warrant. To such a program Baptists should subscribe most heartily and loyally.

CHAPTER XIV

Church History

Matthew	*16:18*
Acts	*2:47*
Acts	*8:1*
Acts	*14:23*
Acts	*15:22*
Ephesians	*1:22*
Revelation	*1:4*
Revelation	*22:16*

The church really began with the preaching and baptizing of John the Baptist. It was not a functioning group at that time, but John was preparing the material for it. The ground was being cleared and the foundation was being dug and poured. Everything was being put in readiness for raising the structure. It truly began in the declaration of Jesus in Matthew sixteen and eighteen when He secured from His disciples a statement of belief acceptable to Him, and on which He could begin the development of His church. He gave careful attention to the training of those who were to guide its beginnings, and after His resurrection

gave the great commission to them, outlining what was to be the program and process of the work. He promised power for its program of conquest; and on the day of Pentecost that power came to start the church to moving in its world-wide task and mission. Persecution scattered its members, and wherever they went new churches were organized and set in order.

The pattern of the early church was a pure democracy. The work was done by the voice and with the consent of the whole group. The members were only those who had exercised a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and had been baptized into the church on such belief and confession. The members were equal in authority and the officers, or servants, of the church were that of bishop or pastor, and deacons. The church practiced believer's Baptism only, and the method was that of the immersion of the believer in water, an outward act symbolizing the inner experience of salvation. The Lord's Supper was practiced at regular services, and was held to be a memorial supper for the purpose of remembrance of what Jesus did on the cross. The first day of the week was adopted as the Christian sabbath because the resurrection occurred on that day. It separated them from the synagogue worship and marked them as followers of Christ and not of the law. They were not connected in any official way to the state, and gave allegiance to the government in abiding by its laws and supporting it by taxes and prayers.

The work of the churches was by voluntary association. Paul and Barnabas had been working together at Antioch for a number of months when people came from the church at Jerusalem teaching that those who would become Christians must be circumcised and keep the law. The church at Antioch authorized Paul and Barnabas and certain other members to go up to Jerusalem and talk with the brethren there about this question of salvation. They had a conference with the church there and the whole group, led by the Holy Spirit, made a decision concerning the matter. The recommendation was not a binding decree but was the result of free and open discussion concerning an important matter of teaching. The delegates were sent by the church, and the report brought back and made to the church. And to make the democratic and free idea more positive and effectual, there were sent brethren from the Jerusalem church to assure the church at Antioch that the decision had been made without coercion, and that all members were in accord on the question.

Paul and Barnabas had been set aside by the church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to go as missionaries to other countries. The remainder of the book of Acts, after the sending out recorded in chapter thirteen, is given to the history of Paul's missionary journeys. The record is clear, both in Acts and in Paul's letters to the churches, that the support of Him by the churches was entirely a voluntary matter. The churches cooperated with

each other in sending gifts to those who were in greater need, and they also gave to the support of Paul and other visiting missionaries who were establishing new churches and fields of endeavor. The churches did the work of spreading the gospel through the missionaries in a fully cooperative manner, just as they also did the work of charity and relief of distress.

The foregoing is clearly the pattern of the New Testament church. Whatever may be the history, or contention, with reference to any subsequent tendencies or movements, I am positive that the New Testament, under any sort of reasonable interpretation, will support this outline of democratic and free church beginning, here given. And I adopt further boldness to contend that if there have not been churches all through the centuries that exhibited these New Testament marks, then Jesus did not mean what He said when He declared, "Go ye therefore and make disciples in all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world". The age He had reference to either closed with the apostolic age at the death of John, and therefore His promise was then fulfilled, or He has had churches through the centuries that have done His work in the way He told them to do it. And the Holy Spirit did not inspire the writing of the New Testament, unless that

same Holy Spirit has interpreted its message to those who have listened to Him when He has come to lead His followers into all the truth. There is no middle ground. We either have His program for the work of the churches, or we don't have it.

As for me, that is the kind of succession that I want. I do not contend that a line of New Testament churches cannot be established from John the Baptist to the meeting of the next convention—on the contrary I think it highly probable that they can; but I make the point that whether they can or not, does not alter my absolute faith in the fact that Jesus and the Holy Spirit have kept New Testament truth and pattern alive, regardless of the publicity or seclusion which may have attended such existence. Oppression and persecution may have been so heavy that numbers became very small, but there has never been a day since John stood on the banks of the Jordan and received for Baptism the Son of God, and such Baptism was approved by the remaining members of the Trinity; that there have not been groups of believers organized and baptized into a church which bears the marks, shares the fellowship, and does the work which the New Testament prescribes. A less faith than that is not enough for me, and I rejoice to be able to express a belief in such a reality.

The death of John occurred about the year one hundred A. D. That marked the close of the apostolic era. There had been given special powers to

the apostles, and under their guidance the churches had become established, and the number of Christians had come to be probably a half million. There had been at least two periods of terrible persecution by the Romans, and John had been banished to the Isle of Patmos for preaching the gospel. He had been given his revelation, and had written the book which abounds in promises of triumph for the churches. All of the New Testament scriptures had been written, and the churches were following in the way of organization and life as laid down by Jesus and Paul and the others who spoke and wrote. The Christians were loyal to the work and teachings, even to the point of death. Many of them laid down their lives, rather than give allegiance to pagan powers as against the plain teachings of the New Testament.

As numbers grew in larger centers the number of pastors, or elders, or bishops, grew. When there would be a number of them in one church one of them, presumably the older one, would assume authority as the leader over the others. And this practice gradually led to the leading Bishops in a church becoming the supervisor over a group of the surrounding churches. By that process the notion of a hierarchy came to be considered, and when Constantine came on the scene early in the fourth century there was fertile soil for a combination of church and state, which he and church leaders effected.

The ideas of formalities in the pagan creeds also had much influence upon many earlier disciples. When pagans and Jews were converted to Christianity they did not completely leave their forms and ceremonies behind. Toward the close of the second century some Christians were holding to the idea that Baptism was necessary to salvation. It was not a general belief, but some believed it. Tertullian opposed the idea and until after his death there was not much adherence given to the teaching. When, about the middle of the third century, it came to be a much disputed issue, we find a man by the name of Novation receiving baptism by a method other than that of immersion. Since it was believed to be necessary to salvation, and since he was too sick to be immersed, the ordinance was administered by pouring. It was not, however, considered valid baptism, since he did not die at that time.

The churches gradually formed into rival groups because of these differences of opinion. By the time of the beginning of the fourth century there had been existing for more than one hundred years a group of churches known as Montanists, who broke away from other churches because of irregularities in belief and practice. Tertullian agreed with this group of Montanists in all essential beliefs. Montanists insisted in strict moral discipline; agreed with the original church in matters of salvation, baptism, and church government; and held to a literal interpretation of the scriptures, especially

as to last things. They would be an exact type of our extreme fundamentalist churches of the modern day. The Novatians were of about the same type, coming a hundred years later, or about the middle of the third century. In all points of doctrine and church government they were like the Montanists with whom they fused, or more correctly the Montanists came to them in great numbers. Donatists, a group of churches existing especially in North Africa early in the fourth century were of the same type and faith and order as Montanists and Novatians. There were minor differences in all these groups, but all of them bore the marks of New Testament churches, and withdrew themselves from the more formal ones because they could not fellowship them in their looseness of teaching and practices as to doctrine and living.

The Emperor Constantine in three hundred and thirteen put Christianity on a par with other religions in the Roman Empire. That caused persecution of Christians to cease. Later the Emperor made himself the head of the church and gave it civil powers. He supported the church in building a great temporal organization and gradually it lost its spiritual power. In the movement to unite state and church it became necessary to pacify many groups of religionists; and the Catholic party of the church, now come to be a majority, admitted thousands of pagan worshippers into the church

who, in spite of their adherence to the new faith, brought over into the church many of the forms and ceremonies of pagan worship. At the councils called by the Emperor the leaders of the Catholic party succeeded in getting adopted rules of doctrine and practice which increased their power and popularity. And since the Emperor was backing the church leaders, to protest was not outwardly effective; and the union of church and state became a definite accomplishment.

The power of church leaders in Rome became more accentuated when the seat of civil government was moved to Constantinople. The fall of Rome to the Barbarians and their acceptance of Christianity completed the work of centralization and from the fact of their accession, and the weakening of the power of the Emperor, the church head became practically absolute. Gregory the Great, at the close of the sixth century of the Christian era succeeded in unifying the church, and may be said to be the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. The development had been gradual for more than three hundred years, but with the decrease in temporal power, caused by the invasion of Rome by the hordes from the North, the Catholic party was able to unite most of the elements necessary to make them an organization that could satisfy the religious demands of the majority. Thus organized and empowered, they set out to bring all countries to the support of

their program; and in the accomplishment of such a quest they used methods which were neither Christian nor ethical.

Montanists, Novatians, and Donatists continued to stay apart from the Catholic party and never sent any messengers or representatives to the various councils called by the group supported by the Emperor. They remained loyal, in all essential matters, to the teachings of the New Testament. Under persecution their members were scattered, but they remained true to the word. A group known as Paulicians picked up the thread near the end of the seventh century. The Donatists were becoming weak in number and the Paulicians became the successors of their heritage. These were followed by the Albigenses, the Paterines, the Petrobrussians, the Henricians, the Arnoldists, and finally the Waldenses. These names were given partly because of an outstanding leader amongst them, and partly as one of scorn by the oppressors. Also location of their existence sometimes effected the naming. Baptist historians are not agreed as to the loyalty to truth and practices of the Waldenses; but the greater weight of evidence seems to prove that they were true to fundamentals. Persecution made groups of them leave New Testament practices for a time, but in the main they were loyal to truth.

As the Roman church made progress it not only increased the power of the pope in Rome, but it more and more strengthened its position that since

to it had been given the keys of the kingdom, and had been commanded to disciple all nations, it should use whatever method was necessary to make that mission a complete one. Persecution is the natural outcome of such a belief, and the Roman church is only being true to its cardinal teachings when it destroys those who do not yield to its demands. It cannot do otherwise and be true to its declared interpretation of its mission. The Bible was taken from the people; the pope was declared to be the final authority in all things religious and moral; marriage was held to be a prerogative of the church; Catholic worship was declared to be the only divinely appointed worship; and those who did not conform to the demands of the church were anathema, and to be dealt with as the enemies of God. The Crusades, the inquisition, the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day, and other purges and pogroms give evidence of the seriousness with which Roman Catholics went about their task.

The Anabaptists, a name given to the dissenting groups because they insisted on baptizing again those who came to them from churches practicing other than immersion for baptism, had been getting copies of the scriptures into the hands of many of the people. In France and Germany many copies had been preserved, copied, and given out. Toward the close of the fourteenth century a man by the name of John Wycliffe in England translated the Bible into English. As the New Testament began to get into the hands of more of the people the

soil was being prepared for a break with the Roman church. Wherever the people got a chance to find out for themselves what the true pattern of the New Testament church was, they immediately recognized that the established church was no akin to it. And they also realized that the persecuted groups were those who made the nearest approach to it. When the invention of printing came about, and the Bible more and more got to the people, those convictions were strengthened and the people became anxious to right existing wrongs.

The chief contribution which the protestant reformation made to the cause of New Testament Christianity was to break the power that was keeping out the light. Luther did not go far away from Roman Catholic teaching, but the important thing is that he went. He carried into his organization most of the sacramental teachings of the church, but he succeeded in forming a sufficient block of antagonism against the Catholic Heirarchy that they were never able to crush the rebellion. Infant baptism and union of church and state, both of them unscriptural and very harmful, were retained by Luther, because it appeared necessary for him to have state support in order to be able to stand, and because infant baptism had come to be a standard practice of all groups of religionists except Anabaptists. Other reformers followed about the same pattern, though Zwingli for a time seemed to be atempting to go back to the New Testament

pattern in work and worship. All of them allowed a freer reading of the Bible, and since enlightenment was the chief need in the battle for New Testament freedom, their contribution was tremendous and of eternal value.

At the time of the reformation the Anabaptists, who had existed through the years under the name of Montanists, Donatists, Waldenses, and others, were hopeful that the reformers would go back to the scriptures and establish themselves on a New Testament basis. They gave assistance to Luther and other reformers, but were forced to part with them when it was found that infant baptism, union of church and state, and other unscriptural practices were brought over into the new organizations. They continued in large numbers in different parts of Europe and remained loyal to New Testament teaching and practice. There was a very considerable number of them in Holland and also in Wales. In several Baptist histories there is found an account in which the king of Holland appointed a committee to make thorough investigation to determine which existing denomination had the best claim to New Testament origin, with the view of making it the state church of Holland. When Doctors Dermont and Ypig made their report in eighteen hundred and nineteen it was as follows, "The Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and have long in the history of the church

received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, as a Christian society, which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages". The Baptists because of their convictions, could not become a state church and declined the honor, but the incident serves a valuable purpose in establishing the fact of their perpetuity.

What Baptists had always needed was a country which would allow them the privilege of preaching and teaching without molestation. They found that in the new world. During the colonial period Baptists, who had come here along with others who were seeking religious liberty, were persecuted and driven out of the colony of Massachusetts, and also had much trouble in Virginia, but there was not the great persecution which had characterized the old world. Those groups which had substituted their own creeds and practices for the plain teachings of the New Testament had persecuted others, as groups always do who make such substitutions, but their strength was not sufficient to effect any wholesale destruction. Roger Williams, who had been driven out of Massachusetts because he would not conform to ecclestiastical regulations established a colony in what is now Rhode Island, and made the principle of religions liberty its cardinal foundation principle. Baptists also fought valiantly for a declaration to be put into our constitution guaranteeing religious liberty, which was achieved

when the first amendment was enacted in seventeen hundred and eighty nine.

Early in the colonial period Baptist churches were organized in South Carolina and Virginia and with the country-wide preaching of Whitefield these churches increased in numbers. There were also many fine Baptist ministers in the Carolinas and Georgia and as the country expanded westward these preachers went into those border states and organized churches and distributed the scriptures. Schools were established for the training of ministers and printing and publishing houses were opened for the dissemination of the printed word and other literature. In the Northern colonies Baptists, beginning in Rhode Island, went into other states and under constitutional liberty made rapid progress.

Immediately preceding the Civil War Baptists divided into two conventions, the Northern Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. The division came about because of some issues coming out of the slavery question. The conventions have, since that time operated separately, but with mutual fellowship and goodwill. Each convention has its own publishing house and also each convention does its own mission work. There is also the National Baptist Convention which represents the work of Negro Baptists in the United States. There are also smaller groups of Baptists but these three conventions enroll the great majority of American Baptists.

In twelve states in the union Baptists have more communicants than any other denomination, while in six of the states they have more members than all other denominations combined. In calculating membership it is also to be remembered that Baptists have no babies on their rolls, and very few children below the age of twelve. Their great majority of members are adults. It is also safe to say that Baptists have received more members into their churches on a strictly evangelistic basis than any other denomination in America. Catholics increased greatly from eighteen hundred and seventy until nineteen hundred and thirty because of the freedom of immigration, but no denomination has won to Christ and baptized into their churches as many unchurched people as have Baptists.

Baptists have had marvelous growth through Sunday Schools and evangelistic campaigns. They have adopted the most modern and effective methods for Sunday School enlargement, and attendance on Baptist Sunday Schools is tremendous. Bible Conferences have also been a specialty with Baptists, and they have also sought to train in leadership through young people's organizations in the churches. Their colleges rank with the best in the country, and their general missionary program is well manned. The new cooperation now operating between white and Negro Baptists is a very heartening sign.

The statement by Dr. John R. Sampey that he considered Baptist growth and power due to their emphasis on, and loyalty to, the scriptures is very well said. And it could be further said that Baptists will experience growth and spiritual power so long as they remain faithful to the scriptures. The Bible is the book of the Baptists, and you can't have Baptists without the Bible. They have been fewest when the Bible has been removed from the people, and most numerous where the Bible has had the freest distribution. God will bless us and the Holy Spirit will lead us just as long as we remain true to the scriptures, but never a day longer.

I think it safe for Baptists to believe that the church was organized through the ministry of John and Jesus and the early disciples; that its pattern is that of a pure democracy; that the work of the churches was by voluntary association; that the Holy Spirit has kept alive churches true to that pattern; that by the union of church and state effected under Constantine and his successors the New Testament pattern was lost to many churches; that New Testament identity was preserved through groups who never came into the Catholic system; that the group known as Anabaptists were of great influence in bringing on the reformation; that with the breaking of the power of Rome Baptists began a more effective ministry; that Baptists in the United States have prospered because they have had the opportunity of unmoles-

ted worship and freedom to teach and propagate their faith; and that our success in the future will depend upon our loyalty to the New Testament and its definite commands. With our Bible we will go out to win the world, but without it our cries will be in vain.

CHAPTER XV

Church Union

Psalms	*133:1*
John	*10:16*
John	*17:21*
Galatians	*3:28*
Ephesians	*4:5*
Ephesians	*4:13*
Hebrews	*2:11*

Church union is a much discussed subject. Organizations charged with the business of bringing it about are set up with adequate staffs and money. One wealthy layman has contributed as much as a half million dollars to bring it about. The Federal Council of Churches in America has for its major purpose the bringing into organic union different protestant groups. Statements of faith and creeds are toned up and down to bring them into general acceptance with more people. Ordinances and church observances are declared to be of little or no consequence, so that members of churches may forget the things that divide them. We are asked to emphasize more the principles on which we agree and forget entirely those on which we are divided.

The New Testament church is based entirely on belief. The first question Jesus asked when He was about to declare the founding of His church was, "Whom say ye that I am?" And on the answer which they gave, He established His church. Every one that was received into the early church came in on a definite belief. Paul writes his longest and most profound letter to correct the early followers on the matter of what they believed. The book of Hebrews, supposedly written by Barnabas, is a master argument for the purpose of establishing in the minds of those who have come out of Jewry into Christianity the supremacy of grace and the New Covenant. When John writes to the seven churches, of which he had been the pastor, he rates them good and bad on a basis of the doctrines they have believed and practices coming out of such beliefs. And when the Spirit is ready to close the Revelation and say the last word in the Bible, He reminds us that we must not add unto or take from.

Obviously then church union rests upon a matter of belief. In the prayer which Jesus offers He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall *believe on me through their word;* That they all may be one". They will be one on the basis of what they believe from the preaching of the word. In Galatians three and twenty six we have Paul saying, "For ye are all the children of God by *faith in Christ Jesus*". Then he says that there is neither male or female, Jew nor Greek, for

they are all one in Christ Jesus by their faith in Him. In Ephesians four and five Paul emphasizes that there is only one Lord, and only one belief, and only one baptism. And on a basis of that unity of belief and practice he says, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith,—unto a perfect man". There is unity only *by faith*. It is inner and spiritual —never outward and organic.

Let us examine the field and see what may be the prospects in this matter of church union in our country, and in the world. Over on one side you have the Roman Catholic Church, listed as the church with the most members in our country. That body claims to be the church organized by Jesus Himself; to be the one to whom He gave the authority to bind and loose on earth and in Heaven; to have a clear line of successors from Peter as the first pope to Pius in the Vatican now; to be the guardian of all religion; to have power to forgive sin; and to be in possession of whatever graces are needed to bring the faithful into eternal life. That church also makes positive claim to have the right of all interpretation of scripture, and place their traditions, or writings of church fathers, on a par with scripture. They have built up a system of sacraments to which their members must be loyal if they receive the blessing of the church.

In countries where they have the majority of the population in their churches they control the political life of the country and supervise the edu-

cation which the people receive. Marriage is a prerogative of the church and families must rear their children in the church. The governments give special protection to the program of the Catholic church, and minor religious groups are allowed whatever privileges of worship and work that the dominant church may decide. The amount of such privileges is most generally based upon the greater or less preponderance of Catholic population. In the United States, where religious liberty is a matter of constitutional right, and where Catholics do not have a majority of the population, their work is based more or less on an equal basis with others except in matters of faith with individual Catholic members.

And please let it be said as a compliment to this church that they know where they want to go and are working at it. They are not soft pedaling the proposition. They are not asking to unite with anybody, and are refusing to let anybody unite with them except on their own terms. Their dogmas would be impossible to me, but they believe them and are doing their best to get others to believe them too. It would seem to be a matter of impossibility to put a distinctly medieval institution out into an enlightened modern world and make it stay, but their ability to do that is concrete evidence of the fact that people do thinking in every field except religion. And it is probably easier to let the church do your thinking for you.

Those of us who served as chaplains in the armed services learned many things, one of which was that you couldn't do business with Rome, except on their terms. The Roman Catholic chaplain took his creed and church regulations into the army and practiced them with his men just like he did in his parish before he came into the army or navy. And he didn't make any apologies for it either. Of one thing you may be positively certain—if the Roman Catholic Church comes into any organic church union it will be under the proposition that everybody else coming in will become Roman Catholics, subscribing to every dogma and practice which their ecclesiastical system has evolved. It will not be a compromise, but a capitulation, with the Roman church at the receiving end of the line.

The next group for consideration is the Anglican Catholics, or protestant Episcopal church. This group presents the peculiar spectacle of endeavoring to be both a Catholic and a protestant church. It professes to be Catholic in the fact that it stands for Catholic principles in its ministry, doctrine and worship; and protestant in the fact that it does not recognize the authority of the Roman Catholic organization or its head. It claims a historic Episcopate and declares itself to have apostolic succession rather than the Roman Church. The book of common prayer is its official formulary and standard of worship. There are about two million members in the United States. The official head of the church is the archbishop of Canterbury

and they also have a presiding bishop in this country. This church is the state church in England, and has had definite political leanings in this country, furnishing thirty percent of the presidents. The National Cathedral at Washington, now in course of construction, is already being spoken of as the Westminister Abbey of America. It is to be the Central Cathedral of governmental importance when union of church and state is effected in the United States, toward which reality we are steadily moving.

This church seeks to be the one through which all others may unite, as declared by its leading American Bishop only a few weeks ago. And a definite plan for that is already in operation. In recent years divergent Methodist bodies have united, as has also been true with Presbyterians. Reform groups are moving toward the Presbyterian standard, and the Disciples and Campbellite bodies are being brought in through the Congregational Church. Already some Disciples ministers are Christening babies in their churches, and infant baptism for the remission of sins is common to all these groups. In churches that have a greater leaning to New Testament teachings on Baptism they have a service which they term as "dedication" or "blessing" of the children. The water is not being used yet, but a cloud, the size of a man's hand, is appearing on the horizon and will finally supply it. Many Baptist churches have already fallen to that fancy.

As the Anglican Catholic church this group also has made working contact with the Greek Catholic church in America. The Greek church has been separate from the Roman church for more than ten centuries and refuses to recognize the pope at Rome as the head of Catholicism. After the Russian Revolution set in the Greek Othordox groups in the United States, seven in number, formed themselves into an independent body. Since their patriarchate is more territorial than centrally ecclesiastical they may have a working fellowship with other Catholic bodies. Life Magazine, some months ago, carried the story of this fellowship in photographic and narrative description. The orders of both priests and nuns, in both Episcopal and Greek Catholic churches, was pictured and described, and their practical unity declared. Thus the Episcopal church in the United States becomes in reality both a Catholic and a protestant church.

There is no real hindrance to a union of all these groups. They have no distinctive doctrines that cannot be dispensed with, or ignored. All of them follow the practice of infant baptism for the remission of sins; all of them attach more than symbolic importance to what they term the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; though some of them continue to hold the doctrine of salvation by grace they nullify that belief in the baptism of infants and the practice of "graces" and good works on a merit basis; none of them would be allergic to an increased supervision of their churches by an

Episcopal heirarchy; and all of them are in accord with ordniation of clergy based upon certain scholastic attainments and ecclesiastical sanction. The matter of the authority of the scriptures will not be a problem, for most all these denominations have their beliefs written into an apostles creed, or a catechism, which they only have to repeat on stated occasions. A prayer and hymn book may easily contain what the laity need to know about the scriptures, and the order of service.

Such an organization will very easily become a popular one. A liberal policy toward divorce will of necessity be adopted, and no question will be asked on that score to people seeking membership in the church. Already any serious protest against free and indiscriminate drinking of liquor has ceased by religious bodies, and liquor interests know that any resolutions passed by conferences gets no further than a recording in the minutes. The church will be so involved in social and international interests that any serious program for local moral renovation will be considered of secondary importance. An attendance at Easter and Christmas, as is now the custom in some of these groups, will be the generally accepted practice, and church membership will become a matter of course, rather than one of conscience.

Lutheran churches, the third Catholic body in this country will not be as eager to unite in this union but, apart from the Missouri Synod group,

will come in when given time. No doctrinal questions would prove a hindrance, but Lutherans profess a primacy in protestantism which they think none of these others have. And since they are the most numerous of all protestant groups on a world basis, they may be inclined to feel that they are still able to compete on a world-wide scale. In a number of small European countries the Lutheran church is overwhelmingly dominant, and they certainly would not wish to compromise their position in these countries.

It would therefore be a fairly safe conjecture to say that within another quarter of a century the Federal Council of Churches in America would be able to effect a satisfactory compromise on which these eighteen and one half million communicants could unite into a working organization. There would be a few smaller groups that might come in also, but these half dozen larger denominations would make up the bulk of membership and support. They would immediately effect union with like bodies in England and on the continent, and by pooling of missionary interests would be able to present a world front in competition to Roman Catholic organization. Their interest in world social reforms will of necessity be paramount, and those of us who live to a ripe old age may be allowed to see the battle drawn between two great and powerful ecclesiastical heirarchies.

It is not expected, however, that there will be a unanimous approval of an organic merger on the part of all the groups nominally entering. There is not assurance that the Southern group of Presbyterian churches known as the Presbyterian Church in the United States, will enter an organic union. There are practically six hundred thousand communicants in this group and they are a most excellent body of people. Their loyalty to most Bible fundamentals is outstanding, and many of the sturdiest and most stable people in the communities where these churches are located belong to this group. They are very zealous for their faith and may be counted upon to spurn any suggestion of compromise on the part of those who place convenience above principle.

There are also many of the churches in the "Church of Christ" or "Disciples" group that will not enter an organic union. These churches hold to a more democratic type of church government than such a merger would make possible, and they also hold to immersion for baptism. Already there are independent Methodist churches being established, and many thousands of members of all these groups, or denominations, will refuse to stay in any ecclesiastical body of the type being offered.

The fact still remains however that there is very definitely and rapidly forming three clear cut religious groups in this country. One is the Roman Catholic group, already strongly entrenched and

definitely established in doctrine and policy; the Episcopal or federated group, not yet completed but potentially so; and the evangelical, or Orthodox, group who generally hold to the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice. Baptists are the most numerous individual segment in this group, and may be counted upon to hold the line against the encroachment of forces calculated to weaken, or altogether destroy, New Testament pattern and practice.

While I was serving on a tour of duty in the Chief of Chaplains Office during the war, a protestant chaplain told me that after the war the Federal Council of Churches was going to organize the churches in a fight against the Roman Catholic Church in this country. He asked me what Baptists would do in such a contingency. I told him that I had no right, or desire, or authority, to speak for any Baptist except myself, but that if such should happen I sincerely hoped that Baptists would have nothing to do with a fight against anybody, but would go ahead and attend to their own job. Indications are that he was correct in his assumption, for I read and hear a great deal about recalling representatives from the Vatican; organizing to combat Catholic propaganda pictures in the movies; and other controversial questions.

What will Baptists do under such a set-up? Some of them will get in it. We are to be attacked through our schools. Already that is being done to

some degree. There is being placed undue emphasis on the social application of the gospel, and preachers and leaders who have not been out there and do not know the actual conditions are being made to believe that all that is necessary is to give them a biscuit and a smile, and you have solved the problem. Into our educational centers these ambassadors of soap and water are going with the proposition that we substitute the formula of salvation through the atoning blood of Christ, and put in its place a watered down teaching of redemption through sacraments and science. No sensible person denies the social import of the gospel; but those same persons know that the whole success of a social gospel depends upon the individual salvation of those upon whom such social work is to be done. Those who have seen the men out there in action can never cease to appreciate the value of a definite experience of grace by the individual himself. Nothing can ever take the place of that, and when Baptists cease to give such a message to the world the candlestick should and will be removed.

We will never lose our passion for the lost as long as we preach a gospel that will deliver from sin. But when we do not have something to give which we know will do the work, we will cease to have a desire to proclaim it. And we will never lose that as long as our young men come from our Colleges and Seminaries thoroughly grounded in the great fundamentals of salvation, as found in the Book. One of the saddest sights yet beheld is to see a man

in the pulpit, called and ordained to give a message of life to those who listen, waste a precious hour and let the people go away without nourishment. We'll need to give heed constantly to the kind of teaching done at our centers of learning and be sure that they are squared by the tenets of the Book.

The majority of twelve million Baptists will not be willing to unite in an organic church union which means the surrender of those peculiar and distinctive doctrines which have sustained us through the centuries. Whatever others may do we will be compelled to stay with the Book. There are New Testament teachings which we believe we cannot afford to neglect, and organic church union means a surrender of these. We do not believe the New Testament teaches that baptism is a means of salvation, and that it should be applied to any but believers. And we also believe that for it to give the message for which it is intended it must be administered in the way the New Testament outlines for it to be done. It may not make any difference to others, but to us it does. The difference comes in the fact that we believe and accept the New Testament to be the rule of both our faith and our practice, and since we are convinced that the New Testament clearly teaches immersion, and that only, for baptism we cannot surrender this fundamental New Testament principle.

We believe the Lord's Supper to be a memorial to the death and suffering of our Lord, and we believe we take the bread and wine for the purpose of remembering what He did for us on the cross, and declaring such to the world until He comes again. We declare that neither of these ordinances have any saving efficacy and cannot attribute to them that which the New Testament does not give them. We believe the Bible to be the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice and do not accept any works of tradition or other substitutes for the plain word of God. While we encourage an educated ministry we could not be a party to an organization that would demand that none but those whom that organization would approve could declare the message of the gospel.

We could not enter an organization that did not place its major emphasis upon the winning of the lost. To bring into the membership of the church those children of families in the church at birth, would not to us be the pattern of the New Testament church; and we could not follow a formula which we do not believe we could defend by the word of God. We would demand that the church be completely separated from the state and an organic church union would have a definite tendency in the direction of union with the state. We would be compelled to contend for the freedom of the individual conscience in all matters of religion, without any coercion by any ecclesiastical

order. We must be as free as the New Testament, and as strict as its commands. In consideration of all that organic church union would imply, it is not believed that very many Baptists would be willing to make the sacrifice, and enter into such union.

And Baptists have enough numerical impressiveness in this country to be the rallying center around which all New Testament followers may unite. There are a number of smaller groups, made so by the misinterpretation of some Bible doctrine, that need to become better acquainted with the distinctive truths taught by Baptists. Some of these go by the name of Baptist, but are out of step with the larger Baptist bodies. We cannot surrender any fundamental New Testament principles, but we should encourage these groups to seek shelter and fellowship with those Baptist groups whom the Holy Spirit has led into large fields of usefulness. Our own churches may be brought into a closer and finer fellowship, and all Baptist bodies should work in harmony toward the accomplishment of a common purpose. And that purpose must be the preserving and proclaiming of the Gospel of the Son of God as given and commanded in the New Testament, and an everlasting watchfulness in the principles given in the word of God. We cannot do less or more than the Book commands, and must ever be known as the people of the New Testament.

It is to be remembered however, that Baptists are ever ready to join with others in building a better moral and social order. We have always stood solidly for any type of reform that would be for the general good of the community. Baptists have been advocates of temperance through the years, and states most predominantly Baptist have been the last to give up laws restraining the use of strong drink. We join with any group that endeavors to bring general uplift to the country, and are willing to go as far as possible in any social reform, so long as we do not compromise any fundamental New Testament principle. We fight for the right of any individual or group to be allowed to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and to propagate their faith in any reasonable way. If others seek the greatest good through organic union we bid them God speed; but if we choose to follow the path of what we believe to be New Testament leading we do so with malice toward none and goodwill toward everybody. In no other way do we believe we can fulfil our given destiny.